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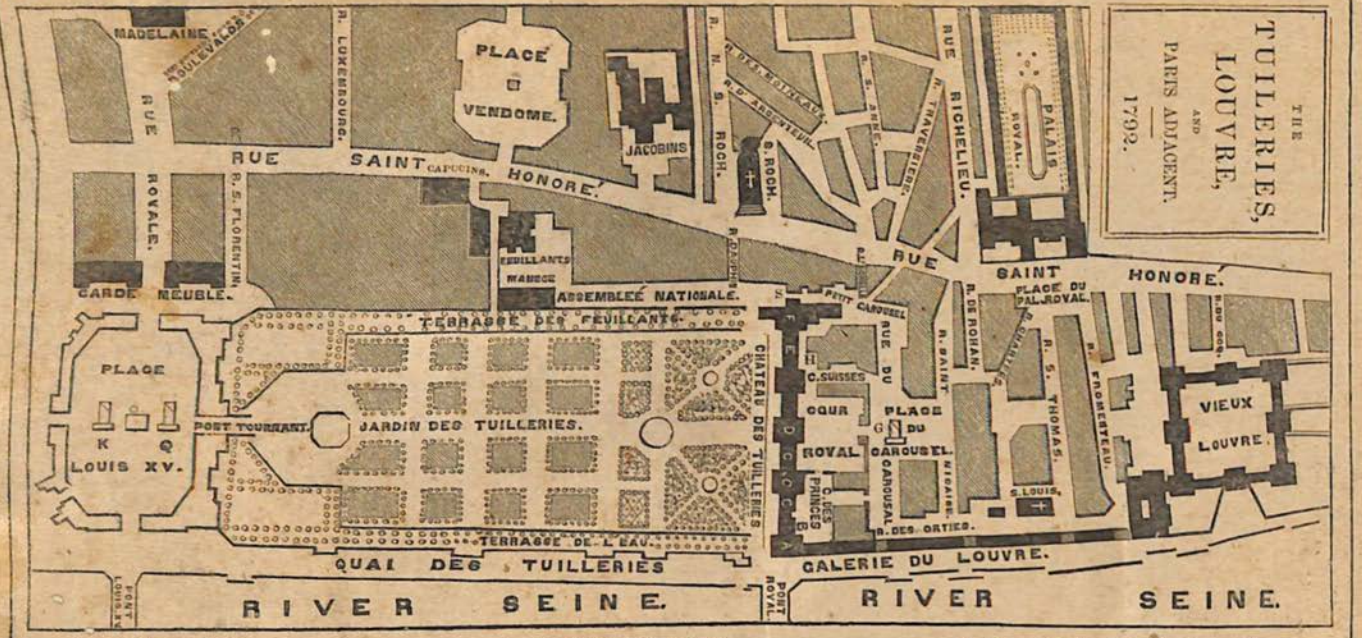

A. Pavillon de Flore.
B. Door by which the Roy. Fam. escaped, June 1791.
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D. Central Pavilion, Entrance, Vestibule, and Stairs.
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PREFACE.

I HAVE been requested to revise and collect into one volume the half-dozen Essays which I contributed to the 'Quarterly Review' on the earlier period of the French Revolution: and I am the more willing to do so, because I believe those Essays contain a good deal of curious, and what is rarer and of more importance, authentic, information on that subject that is not, as far as I know, to be found in any single publication.

My memory and observation of public affairs are about coeval with that event. I was in my ninth year when the Bastille was taken; it naturally made a great impression on me, and the bloody scenes that so rapidly followed rendered that impression unfavourable. Such also was the feeling of my wise and excellent parents, and an alliance between our family and that of Mr. Burke helped to confirm us in that great man's prophetic opinions, which every event from that day to this appears to me to have wonderfully illustrated and fulfilled.

I have thought it fair to say thus much of my own personal feeling, that the reader may be aware of the bias under which I may be suspected of writing, but I must at the same time most conscientiously protest that I have not knowingly allowed it to warp my judgment, nor, as I still more confidently affirm, to misrepresent either by attenuation or aggravation any personal motive or any historical fact. I have endeavoured to be *just*—

I am sure that I have not written a word that I do not believe to be the TRUTH!

The early attention which I was thus led to pay to the Revolution has been actively sustained through a long life, and made me a collector (I believe to a much greater extent than any other person in England) of the innumerable pamphlets and periodical and other publications that I may say deluged France as long as anything like a freedom of opinion existed, as well as of those which were afterwards published under the corrupt and intimidating influence of the successive tyrannies, which found little difficulty in converting a licentious and disgraced press into a rigorous and shameless engine of despotism. These publications, however ephemeral in interest, or apocryphal as authorities, are still valuable and important as contemporaneous evidence, both positive and negative, for what they tell, and, for what they do not, are often as instructive in their falsehood as in their truth. From my acquaintance, imperfect as it must be, with this enormous mass of documents, I am satisfied that no accurate idea of the real springs and interior workings of the great revolutionary machine can be formed without a much deeper and more diligent examination than any historian that I have read appears to have made of them.

Under this persuasion, but feeling myself in every way unequal to undertake a more extensive work, I was glad to take the opportunities that my connection with the 'Quarterly Review' presented, of examining some isolated but important points of the early period of the Revolution, in more detail, and with a more critical reference to contemporaneous documents, than had been, as far as I

NOTICE.

The lamented Author of this work, in the process of seeing it through the press, bestowed more time and greater pains on it, and made larger additions to one or two of the Essays, than he appears to have originally contemplated.

The latter portion of this volume had not received the advantage of his final revision at the moment of his death. Pains have been taken, as far as possible, to supply the want of his editorial care, and it is hoped that the work will be found free from any serious error.

October, 1857.

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2. *Histoire de la Révolution de France.* Par A. Thiers. 10 vols. 8vo. 2nd ed. Paris, 1828.
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know, hitherto attempted; and in the humble hope of inducing others to consult those documents of which the British Museum now contains a large collection, I have consented to the present publication.

I have made a few alterations in my original text, chiefly for the purpose of adapting it to the new shape and order in which it now appears, by the omission of explanatory observations which were necessary when the articles were published separately and at considerable intervals, but, when brought together, would be useless repetitions. I have also made a few corrections and additions on points concerning which I have found more recent information.

The first events that I have treated of—those of 1789—were included in the first *livraison* of M. Thiers' *History of the Revolution*; and finding myself forced to deny the accuracy, to contest the details, and to question the good faith of that work, I was led into a preliminary inquiry as to the circumstances of M. Thiers' life and character, which had led him to take views that I consider so prejudiced and so unjust. His Histories, however, by the personal and political successes and eminence of their author—not certainly by the historical merit of the works themselves—have attained such general circulation and such an appearance of authority, that, even if my article concerning him had not been *first* in chronological order, I should have thought it an appropriate introduction to the consideration of any portion or period of the Revolution of which he seems now to be the most popular, and I fear the most influential historian.

[1856.] J. W. C.

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2. *Souvenirs de la Terreur de* 1788 *à* 1793. Par M. G. Duval, précédés d'une Introduction Historique, par M. Charles Nodier, de l'Académie Française. 4 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1841.
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ESSAY I.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, SEPTEMBER, 1845.]

THIERS' HISTORIES.

1. *Histoire de la Révolution Française.* Par A. Thiers et F. Bodin. 8vo. Paris. Vols. 1 and 2, 1823; vols. 3 and 4, 1824; vols. 5 and 6, 1825; vols. 7, 8, 9, 10, 1827.
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M. Thiers—Sketch of his life illustrative of his credit as an historian — First events of the Revolution — The influence of the Duke of Orleans — The Affaire-Reveillon — The affair of the Prince de Lambesc — The Capture of the Bastile — The ensuing Massacres — The 5th and 6th October.

1789.

WE believe that we shall be able — we are sure that there are abundant materials—to demolish utterly and irretrievably M. Thiers' *credit* as an historian. Whatever of praise may be due to lively talents and artistic skill, unscrupulously employed to misrepresent and falsify *en gros et en détail* every subject he touches, we will not deny him: but we deliberately believe, and all, we trust, produce sufficient evidence to convince our readers, that never was there a writer less entitled to confidence or who has ore[illegible]shamelessly sacrificed historical truth to his private opinions, [illegible]pd [illegible]at is worse, his personal interests.

[illegible] is work, under the successive titles of Histories of the

'*Revolution*' and of the '*Consulate and Empire*' fourteen * octavo volumes have already appeared, others are announced, and it is probable that he will bring them down even to the later times in which he has had so prominent and so profitable a share in alternately reviving and repressing the revolutionary spirit to which his first Essays were devoted.

Of a work so various and so voluminous, yet still incomplete, we do not pretend to give our readers even a general view. We mean to confine ourselves to an examination of the *earlier portion* of it—the façade or portico, as it were, from which we may form a reasonable estimate of the spirit and the style in which the rest of the edifice has been planned and constructed.

We may seem to owe an apology to our readers for not having sooner undertaken this task—but our most popular Parisian contemporary—*La Revue des Deux Mondes*—prefaces an article of the current year on M. Thiers' historical works, written by M. Sainte-Beuve, of the *Académie Française*, an avowed friend and panegyrist of M. Thiers, with the confession of a similar neglect. And the truth is that, in spite of its lively style and a certain air of originality and pretence of candour which M. Thiers had the tact and talent to assume, the peculiar circumstances and patronage under which the work originally appeared and the spirit in which it was written, gave it the character—not of a serious and conscientious History—but of a bookseller's speculation on the state of political parties. No one looked upon it in any other light than as a branch of the general conspiracy then at work against the elder Bourbons—a paradoxical apology for the old Revolution, and a covert provocation to a new one; and this was, we are satisfied, its chief motive—though there was of course something of literary ambition and something more of pecuniary speculation mixed up with it.

It appeared, too, with a very ambiguous aspect—the first *livraison* of two volumes bore the joint names of '*A. Thiers and Felix Bodin*'—Bodin being a young *littérateur* employed by the booksellers in manufacturing a series of historical abridgments, who was willing to introduce his still younger and more obscure friend Thiers into this species of handicraft. The account given

* They now amount to twenty-four (1855).

by M. Quévrard, in his elaborate 'History of French Bibliography,' is as follows:—

'The two first volumes were written in common with M. Bodin, but, M. Thiers having *subsequently retouched them*, the name of M. Bodin was omitted from the title-pages of the later editions. We are assured by a well-informed authority that this work was originally composed on a much smaller scale, and was comprised at first in four small volumes in *eighteens*, which were to have formed part of the series of Historical Abridgments published by Le Cointe and Durey. But these booksellers, thinking that a better thing might be made of the book, *cancelled* the four volumes in 18mo. as waste paper, and it re-appeared with large additions, in an 8vo. shape, as the "History of the Revolution."'—*Quévrard, tit. Thiers.*

M. Sainte-Beuve, in the article which we have just alluded to, gives an account of the origin of the work, and of the merit of these first volumes, substantially similar but still less flattering:—

'The idea was Bodin's—who urged it upon Thiers, and seeing him working so well at it, resigned his co-operation with a good grace. Bodin's name therefore was thus associated with that of M. Thiers in the first volumes, but disappeared from the third. In those two first volumes it is evident that the young historian was only a *tyro*, and had not yet attained either method or originality. Like most historians, after a study *more or less adequate of the facts*, after inquiries *soon and easily* satisfied, and having said at once "*mon siége est fait*," he *gets out of the scrape* by his style—by the dramatic interest of the narrative, and by some brilliant portraits. The publication of these two volumes over, M. Thiers felt (and he himself *confesses* it with that candour which is one of the charms of superior minds) that he had *almost everything to learn* on the subject he had undertaken, and that a cursory perusal and a lively arrangement of materials and memoirs *already published—was not history*—such as he was capable of conceiving it.'—p. 223.

The character of a work thus described by a friend, and undertaken and carried on—not as serious history, but as a pecuniary and party speculation, and to serve accidental and personal purposes—is so necessarily blended with the writer's individual circumstances, that both M. Thiers' admirers and adversaries have thought it necessary to preface their reviews of his book with a sketch of his life.

We, in following this example, shall avoid as much as possible any mere personality, and shall only observe on those circum-

stances which appear to have influenced his *soi-disant* historical labours.

Marie-Joseph Louis Adolphe Thiers was born at Marseilles on the 16th of April, 1797, of very poor parents *—his father being, we are told, a working locksmith. This topic has been handled invidiously by his detractors, and eulogistically by his admirers, to an extent which we cannot adopt in either sense. In revolutionary times sudden, and even brilliant, successes are not always the proof of merit: they are sometimes the very reverse, and more frequently the result of accident; and however honourable it may be to the individual to have raised himself to eminence from a low origin, it rarely happens that he can emancipate himself altogether from the feelings and habits in which he was brought up. Buonaparte himself, notwithstanding his education in the military, and therefore *noble*, school of Brienne, never, even in his highest elevation, could get rid of the instincts of his early humility; and though a conqueror and an emperor, he never was a *gentleman*. So M. Thiers—advocate, journalist, historian, minister, nay, prime minister—has always been and will be essentially *un peu gamin;* and we think that we can trace throughout his career a want of that consistency, decorum, and *mesure*, as the French call it — that discipline of mind, manners, and principles, which can rarely be acquired under the precarious and reckless habits of low life. Whatever favourable training the young mind receives in such a case may be generally traced to maternal care; so in this case, we are told that the mother of M. Thiers, though fallen into extreme poverty, was of a decent *bourgeois* family, related, it is said, though distantly, to the two poets *Chenier*—Joseph, the Jacobin Tyrtæus, and André, his victim brother. By her connexions she was enabled to obtain for her boy a *bourse*, that is, gratuitous education, in the public school of Marseilles: so that it must be admitted that M. Thiers may naturally remember with gratitude the Imperial régime. Here his progress is said to have been from the first satisfactory, and towards the conclusion of the course brilliant, though of the details no more is told than that he was a tolerable Latinist,†

* They appear on the register of their son's birth as '*Pierre Louis Marie Thiers et Marie Magdalaine Amic, mariés.*' The *Christian* names and the emphatic addition *mariés* imply that the parents were of the good old-fashioned school.

† We have some doubts as to his classical attainments. In all the editions that we have seen of his History we find the egregious blunder of confounding Æschines, the rival of Demosthenes, with Æschylus, the tragic

and that he studied geometry with that taste for the military profession with which Buonaparte inoculated the rising generation. We cannot now forbear to smile at the idea of M. Thiers *en militaire;* but we recollect that the 'Historian of the Decline and Fall' professes to have learned something from his services in the Hampshire militia—and from the superabundant diligence with which the Historian of the French Revolution loves to dwell on the details of the War, it is evident that he fancies that he had a vocation in that direction, and he dreams, perhaps, that if the peace had not imposed upon him the inferior necessity of being only a Prime Minister, he might, himself, have been another *First Consul.*

But in 1814-15 the military despot fell, and Thiers, like thousands of other embryo heroes, had to look out for another profession; and it was natural that the activity and ambition of his mind, as well perhaps as an instinctive literary taste, should have led him to the bar. In 1815 he removed to Aix, the seat of the chief tribunal of the department and of the schools of law, where he seems to have looked into codes and digests no more than was just necessary to pass a slight examination, while his real occupation was writing literary essays and getting up political mutinies against the existing government—a road that led so many of the literary heroes of the Revolution to the Tarpeian rock, but carried him in triumph to the Capitol.

'M. Thiers, whose ardent and ambitious spirit seems to have had the *presentiment* of a brilliant futurity, already played in the law schools the part of the leader of a party: he harangued, ranted,

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poet; which blunder is repeated in the English translation. Again: of the '*bonnet rouge*' of the Jacobins, he says, 'a *new* kind of ornament *borrowed from the Phrygians*, and *now* become [*devenu*] the emblem of Liberty.' It was neither new nor borrowed from the Phrygians. It had been in all classical antiquity the emblem of Liberty. Its first appearance as an emblem of the French Revolution was on Friday, the 24th of Febrt-ary, 1792, at the representation of a piece at the *Théâtre des Variétés*, called *L'Auteur du Moment*, which (being supposed to ridicule Joseph Chenier, whose *patriotic* play of Charles IX. was then in high vogue) the Jacobins determined to suppress, and a red cap on a *pique* was the standard under which they marshalled their party. The rioters were successful, one of their opponents was killed, and the red cap came immediately into general use as the distinction of a patriot. It is remarkable that this signal alarmed even the Ultra-Patriots, who at first endeavoured to check the title *Jacobin* and emblem of the *Bonnet rouge*, both of which in a few weeks they so zealously adopted. See *Révolutions de Paris*, Nos. 139-141; *Feuille Villageoise*, No. 28; *Bertrand, Annals*, vi. 11.

and roared against the restored government—invoked the recollections of the Republic and the Empire—became an object of suspicion to his professors—of alarm to the police—and of enthusiasm to his fellow-students.'—*Galerie des Contemporains Illustres.*

At Aix he formed what our classical neighbours call a *Pylades-and-Orestes* friendship with Mignet, a young man whose circumstances were very similar to his own—cultivating, like him, small literature, and propagating ultra-liberalism under the guise of studying the law—like him producing a 'History of the Revolution,' and like him, and chiefly we believe by his patronage, rewarded—though not in so eminent a degree—by the *July* dynasty, with honours and offices.

About this time the Academy of Aix proposed a prize for the best 'Eloge of Vauvenargues,' a metaphysical and deistical writer of the last century, and a native of that town. Thiers contributed an Essay—which, though applauded, was not, any more than its competitors, thought worthy of the subject, and the adjudication of the prize was adjourned to the next year. It is said that Thiers owed this mortification to his having allowed the secret of his authorship to transpire, and to the reluctance of the Academy to encourage the turbulent young lawyer, '*le petit Jacobin.*' Not disheartened, however, he next year sent in his former Essay; but one from an unknown hand had in the mean while arrived from Paris, which was so decidedly superior to all the others, that the Academicians hastened to give it the prize—though they awarded Thiers the second place. On opening the sealed packets that contained the names of the authors, Thiers was found to be the author of both the first and the second—to the mortification, it is said, of the Academicians and the triumph of the Liberals. This work seems, from the extracts which we have seen, to be a respectable *coup d'essai*, written with some thought, in an easy style, and peculiarly free from the affectation and bombast which are the common characteristics of the French '*Eloge.*'

Meanwhile M. Thiers had been called to the bar; and practised, or rather endeavoured to practise, but with, as might be expected from his temper and his studies, very little success; and so, impatient of an obscure and humble position, he and his bosom friend Mignet set out in September, 1821, to try their fortunes in Paris—'rich in hope and talents, but very low in cash.' Their expedition to the capital reminds us of that of Johnson and Garrick

to London, and, like our moralist, their chief if not only resource was a recommendation from some friend in the provincial city to a fellow-townsman resident in Paris.

This patron was the then celebrated deputy Manuel, who, like themselves, had been a barrister at Aix. Elected for the violence of his liberalism into Buonaparte's chamber of the 100 days, and subsequently re-elected by the same party, he was now the boldest and most eloquent orator of the Opposition, of which Lafitte, then thought one of the wealthiest bankers of Europe, was the patron, paymaster, and, we believe, chief manager. There can be little doubt that, even at this time, Lafitte must have suspected, if he had not actually begun to feel, those commercial embarrassments which, some years later, ended in a great and somewhat scandalous bankruptcy;* but, as always happens in such desperate cases, he was not on that account the less profuse of what was really other people's money, in endeavouring to bring about *another* revolution, for the purpose—such was his predominant and almost avowed idea—of raising the Duke of Orleans to the throne.

The Press, which had been so long and so utterly enslaved by Buonaparte, had, like the prototype of *Mind* in the heathen mythology, started at once into life, full grown and full armed; and challenging not liberty merely, but sovereignty, it became the chief engine to overthrow the *only* French government that had ever allowed it anything like freedom. Opposition newspapers were founded with the double object of influencing public opinion and of enlisting and rewarding the young and clever literary adventurers with whom the system of cheap education and the sudden limitation of the military profession had overstocked society. Manuel recommended his two young patriots to Lafitte, who very soon provided for them by employing them in two opposition journals—Mignet in the *Courrier*, and Thiers in the *Constitutionnel*. One of M. Thiers' young friends, Lœve Vémars, gives the following account of the 'very modest' habitation—even after he had obtained some reputation amongst his associates—of the future Prime Minister of France :—

'I clambered up the innumerable steps of the dismal staircase of

* It was proved in a subsequent suit between the Bank of France and the house of Lafitte and Co., that in 1828 the latter were already insolvent to the amount of about 400,000*l*. How long this deficit had been growing up did not appear.—*Deux Ans de Règne*, p. 422.

a lodging-house situated at the bottom of the dark and dirty *Passage Montesquieu*, in one of the most crowded and noisy parts of Paris. It was with a lively feeling of interest that I opened, on the fourth story, the smoky door of a little room which is worth describing—its whole furniture being an humble chest of drawers—a bedstead of walnut-tree, with white calico curtains—two chairs, and a little black table with rickety legs.'—*Hommes d'Etat de France.*

This was probably as good accommodation as either Johnson or Goldsmith were able to afford themselves on their first arrival in London—and we are induced to notice it only from the rapidity with which this humble scenery was changed, and its striking contrast with the singular elegance of M. Thiers' private residence in the *Place St. George*, and still more with the splendour of the ministerial palace of the *Boulevard des Capucines*.

The first publication of M. Thiers, of which we have any notice, will appear to an English reader an odd *début* for a politician and historian of such eminence. It was a biographical essay on the life of Mrs. George Anne Bellamy, *en tête* of the 'Mémoires' of that actress (1822). This we have never seen, and it is now, we suppose, a curiosity. He must also at this period have been writing his 'History,' of which the first volumes were published in 1823, in less, it seems, than two years after his arrival in Paris. But his chief employment and resource was the *Constitutionnel*, in the columns of which he soon distinguished himself by the vivacity and taste of his literary contributions, and by the vigour and boldness of his political articles. The *Constitutionnel* rose in 1825 to 16,250 subscribers, the greatest number of any journal in Paris: while the *Journal des Débats*, written in a moderating and conservative spirit, had only 13,000—a number, however, equal to that of all the other journals of Paris put together. At the July revolution the *Constitutionnel* had reached near 20,000, while the *Débats* had fallen off to 12,000; and the most popular of the pure Royalist journals did not exceed 5000. This is a sufficient indication of the political feeling of the reading public. M. Thiers' growing value was duly appreciated. M. Lafitte saw that he had made a prize: he introduced him into the higher circles and confidence of his party; and this not only flattered M. Thiers' vanity and taste, but it extended his sphere of knowledge and of thought, and stimulated at once his diligence and his energy.

Lafitte was a light and giddy man, with a great flux of plausible talk, and an ultra-Gascon vanity. It was no uncommon thing to hear him tell Englishmen, '*Je suis le Fox de ce pays-ci.*' His position as a great banker gave him a reputation for solid talents which he never possessed, and a degree of weight and authority which he never deserved. Whether from his secret financial transactions with Buonaparte, which were very extensive—or from some pique against the restored family—or from higher motives of political conviction—or from some lower and discreditable influences which were subsequently imputed to him—it is certain that he had very early '*affiché*' his enmity to the Restoration:—so much so that in 1814 an eminent Englishman—to whom he was declaiming in that strain—pleasantly told him 'that he was sorry to find that the *House of Lafitte* had declared war against the *House of Bourbon.*' When subsequently his neglect of his business and the expenses of his political intrigues had involved him in pecuniary difficulties, it was very natural that he should become more and more anxious to merge—or excuse—or perhaps repair his own insolvency in a general confusion: and he was not, in such circumstances, likely to forget that the Duke of Orleans was the richest subject in Europe, and in a condition, if he should become King of France, to be magnificently grateful.* It is, however, within our own knowledge that as early as 1818, when his great pecuniary difficulties were not yet suspected, the examples of James II. and William III. were frequently in his mouth—and we have little doubt that from this source gradually flowed all the allusions and analogies which the opposition press was in the habit of drawing from the English proceedings in 1688. It must indeed be admitted that there had been, throughout the whole course of the French Revolution, a chain of very remarkable coincidences with corresponding events in English history, which

* When Louis-Philippe found himself obliged to dismiss the Lafitte ministry in March, 1831, the extent of his pecuniary gratitude to M. Lafitte was the subject of an angry discussion. It was alleged, on the part of the King, that he had paid in 1831 for M. Lafitte 12,000*l.* — that he had given him 400,000*l.* for the forest of Breteuil, which, as it produced only 8000*l.* a year, was considerably above its value—and that he had guaranteed a loan from the Bank of France to M. Lafitte of 240,000*l.* These amounts were disputed; but whatever may have been the degree of the royal liberality, what honest claim could M. Lafitte have for any liberality at all, unless, indeed, he thought himself entitled to extort from Louis-Philippe the humiliating confession that, like old Didius, he had *bought* the crown?

we have before incidentally noticed, but which we think it is worth while to exhibit more clearly in the following synopsis :—

Charles I.	Louis XVI.
Unpopularity of the Queen.	Unpopularity of the Queen.
The Long Parliament.	The self-constituted Assembly.
Flight to the Isle of Wight.	Flight to Varennes.
Trial and execution.	Trial and execution.
Government by the Parliament.	Government by the Convention.
Cromwell.	Buonaparte.
Expels the Parliament.	Expels the Assemblies.
Military despotism.	Military despotism.
Richard Cromwell set aside,	Napoleon II. set aside.
Restoration of Charles II.	Restoration of Louis XVIII.
Amnesty to all but regicides.	Amnesty to all but regicides.
Popish and Ryehouse plots.	Conspiracies of Berton, Bories, &c.
Unpopularity of the Duke of York.	Unpopularity of Count d'Artois.
Outcry against the Jesuits.	Outcry against the Jesuits.
James II., late King's brother.	Charles X., late King's brother.
Suspected birth of the Pretender.	Suspected birth of D. of Bordeaux.
Royal Declarations of indulgence.	Royal Ordinances.
Convention Parliament.	Meeting of the dissolved Chamber.
Flight and abdication of the King.	Flight and abdication of the King.
Expulsion of him and his family.	Expulsion of him and his family.
They take refuge in FRANCE.	They take refuge in ENGLAND.

And, finally, both Revolutions arrived at the same identical result —the calling to the vacant throne the *late King's cousin*, being the *next male heir* after the abdicating branch.

These leading coincidences, and some collateral ones too complicated for a synopsis, are very curious, and at first sight surprising —but they are not unnatural nor even accidental — they only prove, when closely examined, that the rule of 'like causes producing like effects' is almost as certain in the moral and political as in the physical world. But there were in France stronger incentives to the change of dynasty than existed in England. The English rebellion had not essentially disturbed the great foundations of society—and the English Restoration endangered no private rights, and rather satisfied than alarmed public principle. But in France *everything* had been subverted—*bouleversé*—not merely the face of things, but the things themselves;—property,

above all, had changed hands to an extent infinitely wider than the Commonwealth confiscations in England, and that too under the operation of such cruel and unjustifiable illegalities as could not but render the new possessors very sensitive as to their titles. The usurping government of France had moreover created an extensive nobility and gentry of its own:—now all those interests and feelings were offended, and pretended to be alarmed, by the return of those whom, if they did not really fear as claimants of their properties, they certainly hated as antagonists of their principles, and rivals to their new-fangled aristocracy. Many even of those who most wished for peace and quiet under the shelter of a monarchy were not sorry to have a monarch whose own revolutionary title to the crown should be a guarantee for all the interests that had grown out of the Revolution.'

This was no doubt the basis and reasoning of M. Lafitte's project, which artfully allied itself with and assumed the direction of all other dissatisfactions and disturbances as they successively appeared. One instance, out of many, too little noticed at the time and since almost forgotten, is worth recalling:—

'On the morning of the 11th of March, 1821, an insurrection broke out in Grenoble, the leader of the mob proclaiming "*that a revolution had been effected in Paris—that the King had abdicated—that the Duke of Orleans had been placed at the head of a provisional government—that the tri-coloured flag had been hoisted, and the constitution of* 1791 *restored.*"'—*Lacretelle, Restor.*, iii. 31.

This singular anticipation of the events of July, 1830, proves at least what were the predominant ideas of the Movement party. In the trial of Bertin, in 1822, the law-officers of the crown distinctly charged these and similar disturbances upon a *directing committee* in Paris, and by name on its leading members, Generals Lafayette and Foy, and MM. Lafitte and Manuel. This grave imputation was denied at the time—rather faintly, because the parties were afraid of daring the ministry to the proof; but since the July revolution it has been boasted of. Sarrans makes it a new claim for Lafayette on the gratitude of his country, that his own head and that of his son were risked on this occasion. And M. Thiers, in his pamphlet '*La Monarchie de* 1830,' published in 1831, states that the idea of the Duke of Orleans' elevation 'dated from *fifteen years* before, and that every intelligent mind had already designated him for King.' This probably was

true only of M. Lafitte and the 'intelligent minds' of his special friends and followers; but it is—like the more celebrated phrase of '*la comédie de quinze ans*'—an admission that such were the sentiments and doctrines into which the patronage of M. Lafitte had enlisted, amongst a great many others, MM. Mignet and Thiers.*

At first their co-operation was confined to their respective newspapers, but it soon overflowed into other channels, and produced, as we think, a very strange occurrence. These two young men, bosom friends—inhabiting, *together* it seems (*Gal. des Contemp.*), the poor apartment before described and working for a precarious livelihood—suddenly came before the public as rival authors, each with a '*History of the French Revolution.*' The works are no doubt very different in their styles—Mignet's being a kind of *post mortem* anatomical lecture, which exhibits little more than the skeleton of the subject:—while Thiers' presents the Revolution dressed up like a stage-player, with the most elaborate endeavour to conceal its deformities, and to give it, by theatrical illusion, an air of grace or of grandeur. But, notwithstanding this marked difference in the *execution* of the works, it still seems very strange that two young men, in such very peculiar circumstances, should have simultaneously undertaken tasks so nearly identical—so likely to force them into a kind of rivalry or collision, and to spoil in some degree each other's market. Finding no explanation of this odd concurrence in the reviews or biographies, we are driven to our own conjectures; and the following appears to us to be at least a plausible solution of the enigma.

We have just stated M. Lafitte's fixed and passionate desire to place the Duke of Orleans on the throne, and we have sufficient indications of the indefatigable intrigues and profuse expenditure

* The Duke of Orleans, however, was too prudent to mix himself personally in these matters, and it seems that he had never seen M. Thiers till the night between the 30th and 31st July, 1830. But M. Saint-Beuve, in stating this, adds a fact, which entirely contradicts his own inference; he says that '*Manuel advised Thiers early not to see the Duke of Orleans.*' Why should Manuel have thus *early* advised an obscure and subaltern journalist, as Thiers then was, not to see the *Duke of Orleans?* What could Thiers have had to do with the Duke of Orleans? We, however, in spite of M. Sainte-Beuve's unlucky suggestion, persist in our doubt that the Duke was ever directly concerned in any of M. Lafitte's earlier intrigues. He may have had some notion of his design, but probably kept himself clear of all guilty participation.

with which he pursued that object; but he met little sympathy—in fact, the great difficulty he found in accomplishing it, even after the July revolution had vacated the throne, proves that there was no public opinion with him or the Duke; and so—with that confidence which financiers are apt to have in their power to influence public credit—he resolved to bring his candidate into fashion, and raise the character of the House of Orleans, as he might do the price of Bank Stock; but the *antécédens* of that house were not favourable to this speculation: all former historians had joined in a chorus of indignation against the crimes of the Revolution, and even the most liberal amongst them had a tendency to keep alive and sharpen the feelings of shame and horror with which the majority of the French people looked back on those disastrous and disgraceful days, and in an especial degree on the most odious cause and accomplice of all those atrocities—*Philippe Egalité*. Now, towards producing the son—little known to the public except as the son of such a man—the first step would naturally be an attempt to efface or extenuate the crimes of the father. It was therefore, as we suspect, decided by the leaders that, in addition to the light troops of newspapers and pamphlets, the heavy artillery of regular history should be brought into action, and that, while the inestimable benefits and the immortal glory conferred on France by the Revolution should be blazoned to the highest, its crimes and horrors should be palliated and excused; and, as an important corollary to the general design, that the case of *Egalité* should be kindly yet cautiously handled—keeping him in a shadowy background—not wholly unnoticed, lest it should be said that the Revolution was ashamed of him—not altogether whitewashing him, lest outraged truth should rise up and remonstrate too loudly—but just mentioned where he could not well be omitted, with a charitable ambiguity—the precursor of that bolder insult to the feeling and common sense of all mankind, which, when M. Lafitte's plot had ripened into success, proclaimed him '*le plus honnête homme de la France.*' Of course it would add greatly to the effect if all this should be done in two solemn and substantial Historical Works, so different in size, style, general arrangement, and artistic character, that they never could be suspected of being concerted fabrications of the same shop. We do not venture to say that these twin Histories were concocted solely for this Orleanist project. There were, no doubt, as we before said, the concur-

rent objects of literary profit and fame, and a powerful share of the old revolutionary impulse in the minds of the writers; but we do believe, and think we could show from a concurrence of minute circumstances, that they were written in *concert*—that Thiers is only an amplification of Mignet, and Mignet a table of contents to Thiers; and that both, whether spontaneously or by the suggestion of the leader of the party, were made subservient to the general views of the new revolutionists, and collaterally to their designs in favour of the Duke of Orleans. It is at least certain that if the works had been undertaken with that special object, they could hardly have fulfilled it better. We shall examine in due course M. Thiers' mode of handling these matters; but in order to have done with M. Mignet, we shall at once produce *all* the passages of his philosophical History in which this *primum mobile* of the Revolution, the *Egalité* Duke of Orleans, is mentioned—and *they are but three!*

The first introduces that prince—very much *à propos de bottes*—for the purpose of denying that he had any party or real influence in the Revolution:—

'The Duke of Orleans, to whom *they* [that is, all mankind, except MM. Mignet and Co.] have imputed a party, had very little influence in the Assembly—he voted with the majority and not the majority with him. The personal attachment of some few members—his name—the fears of the Court—the popularity with which his opinions were rewarded—*hopes much more than plots*—gave him the character of factious; but he had neither the qualities *nor even the defects* of a conspirator; *he may have helped*, with his purse and his name, popular movements which would have equally happened without him, and which had a very different object from his elevation.'—*Mignet*, 108.

We need not stop to expose the confusion, self-contradictions, and general falsehood of this passage; but our readers will contrast the hesitating hypothesis that the 'Duke *might have helped* with his purse,' with the bold assertion that, *whether he did or not*, it produced no result.

Again: in the relation of the frightful events of the 5th and 6th of October, 1789—the real pivot on which the Revolution turned from good to irretrievable evil,* and which was the indis-

* Whatever of permanent good, either political or social, France has derived from the *Revolution of* 1789, was begun and in principle irrevocably ratified,

putable movement of the Duke of Orleans—his name is not even alluded to; but by and bye, on occasion of his subsequent visit to England, it is thus mentioned:—

'The Duke of Orleans—*who wrongly or rightly* was considered the planner of the insurrection—consented to go on a mission to England.'—*Ib.* 131.

'*Wrongly or rightly.*' And this complaisant doubt is expressed by a philosophical historian of a fact as notorious as the sun, and admitted by the pusillanimous evasion of the culprit, which broke up the confederacy between him and the more daring Mirabeau.

The third direct mention of him is in a general attempt of M. Mignet to varnish over some of the most atrocious murders of the Convention by a kind of classification *motivée*:—

'The *Dictatorial* Government [*the Committees of the Convention*] struck at all the parties with *which it was at war* in their highest and most sensitive places. The condemnation of the Queen was directed against Europe—that of the *Twenty-two* [*Brissot, &c.*] against the Girondins—that of the *wise* [*le sage!*] Bailly against the old Constituant party—and, finally, that of the Duke of Orleans against certain members of the Montagne, who were suspected of plotting his elevation.'—*Ib.* 405.

This exceeds the former passage in absurdity and falsehood, and deserves a few words of fuller exposure. That bloody mockery of justice, the *Revolutionary Tribunal*, is kept altogether out of sight, and M. Mignet endeavours indirectly to palliate its murders by thus presenting them as the acts of a Government invested by the perilous circumstances of the country with a *dictatorial* right of *war* against its public enemies—a nefarious principle, too bad to have been alleged even by the original murderers. He would have us believe—contrary to all evidence, contrary to the knowledge of all—not a few—surviving witnesses—that the murder of the prostrate and helpless Queen was a stroke of public policy against *Europe;* as if the previous execution of the King, and declaration of war against the very name of monarchy throughout Europe, had not rendered the death of the Queen a mere insulated, wanton, and unmeaning cruelty:—that 'the murder of

with the full concurrence of the King and of the soundor portion of the people, prior to the outrages of the 6th October; after that, all was violence and terror—alternate anarchy and despotism!

the *Twenty-two* was directed against the *Girondins*;' as if the *Twenty-two* were not themselves the *Girondins*:—that the 'murder of Bailly was meant to intimidate the old Constituants;' as if any one at that time cared, or even thought of the old Constituants; as if it were not one of the most striking and notorious facts of the whole revolutionary tragedy that the poor morosoph Bailly was rather tortured to death than executed, in the Champ de Mars, in *personal* vengeance of his share in repressing a riot on that very spot three years before: and, finally, that 'the murder of the Duke of Orleans was a demonstration against certain members of the *Mountain* who had *plotted* his elevation;' as if it were not the *Mountain* and the *plotters* themselves who put him to death; as if the historian had not just before told us that the Duke had *no party* and *no plots*; and as if he had been a victim of the same innocent and interesting class as the Queen, or Bailly, or the Girondins:—for the crimes of the latter, great as they were, can never be justly placed in the same category with those of *Egalité*.

We have been led to notice these passages, not by selection, but because they comprise the *whole* of what M. Mignet thinks proper to tell us of the share of the Duke of Orleans in the Revolution—he does not so much as allude to his vote for the death of the King, nor even to the assumption of the name *Egalité*—a most significant silence: to which we may add, as an appropriate *pendant* —that no description, nor, as we recollect, any mention of that revolutionary Saint, whose influence worked so large a portion of M. Mignet's miracles—the *Guillotine*—is allowed to sully the pages of his philanthropic History: and the stupendous horrors of the *Revolutionary Tribunal* of Paris, with its 2700 victims—the *Noyades* of Nantes—the *Mitraillades* of Lyons—the proconsular massacres in all the great towns of France—are huddled together, and rather concealed than recorded in these few vague words—'*Death became the only rule of governing, and the Republic was delivered over to daily and systematic executions:*' to which the impartial historian takes care to append a gentle hint that, for whatever mischief was done, the sufferers themselves were really the guilty parties by the resistance with which the Revolution had been originally met: all that followed, he thinks, was natural—inevitable: and if we were to push this philosopher's reasoning to its obvious conclusion, we should find that poor Louis XVI. was guilty not only of his own murder, but of cutting

off the heads of the thousands of all ranks and parties that followed him to the scaffold. We shall see by-and-by that M. Thiers' 'History' is also composed on exactly the same absurd and mischievous falsification of facts and perversion of reasoning.

We are not reviewing M. Mignet—though we confess we ought to have done so long ago; but all the French biographers and critics admit that he and M. Thiers were so identified in principle, and so evidently '*fingers of the same hand*,' that we could not overlook the connexion and mutual elucidation of their Histories—coming from the same workshop—at the same period of time—under the same patronage—and, as we think the result shows, for the same ultimate purpose. Besides, we are not sorry to have an opportunity of expressing, however late and however cursorily, our very unfavourable opinion of Mignet's work—for his *skeleton* style and method have obtained for him a kind of *primâ facie* reputation of accuracy and impartiality which he assuredly does not deserve. An ordinary reader may sometimes suspect that Thiers is too brilliant to be trusted, while Mignet seems too dry to be doubted; whereas, in truth, they are, though by different processes, equally deceptive. Thiers' portrait flatters the Revolution by altering the details; Mignet's coarser and colourless hand falsifies the outline.

Here, in strict chronological order, we should pursue our observations on M. Thiers' first History; but it will be more convenient, we think, to complete our slight sketch of his life before we proceed to the fuller examination of his work.

We have said that his articles in the *Constitutionnel* had given him a political position; and his 'History,' written in the sense of the prevailing public opinion, and hardly less a measure of Opposition than his newspaper articles—which it resembled in many respects—obtained him, at least with his own party, a more determined and permanent reputation. But still the wished-for revolution did not arrive: the respectable and not unpopular ministry of M. de Martignac seemed even to adjourn any immediate probability of it; and the activity and ambition of M. Thiers seem to have become somewhat impatient of the fruitless conflict he was engaged in. 'He began,' says M. Sainte-Beuve, 'to contemplate a "General History."' He does not say of *what*; but adds, 'that for this new object M. Thiers thought it necessary to prepare himself by a diligent study of the higher sciences.'

'Those who have had the pleasure of a long acquaintance with M. Thiers remember—not without charm—this, as I may call it, *scientific phase* of M. Thiers' life. He studies Laplace, Lagrange—studies them *pen in hand*—smitten with the love of the higher *calculs*, and making them. He traces meridians (*des méridiens*) at his window, and arrives in the evening at a party of friends, reciting, with an accent of enthusiasm, those noble and simple last words of the *Système de la Nature*—"Let us preserve, nay, carefully augment, the storehouse of these high pursuits, the delights (*délices*) of thinking beings."'

Whatever doubts this high-flown passage may excite as to the scientific acquirements of either M. Sainte-Beuve or M. Thiers, it would be uncivil to doubt the facts: we, therefore, must believe that M. Thiers actually makes his calculations 'pen in hand;' and that he has accomplished that heretofore undiscovered problem of finding more than one meridian for the same window. *The* meridian of a window every schoolboy can find with two pins and two half-hours of sunshine.

About the time that M. Thiers was thus in his '*scientific phase*,' it happened that M. Hyde de Neuville, the Minister of Marine, was preparing a voyage of discovery under Captain Laplace. The scheme attracted M. Thiers' active and inquisitive propensities: he asked, says M. Sainte-Beuve, and obtained, the consent of the minister and the commandant to his joining the expedition; and M. Hyde de Neuville even proposed to him the office of historian (*rédacteur*) of the voyage. All was arranged: M. Thiers had taken leave of his friends, and was on the point of embarking, when the Martignac ministry was overthrown, and, on the accession of M. de Polignac, M. Thiers or his advisers foresaw the approach of a political tempest, in which he should be more in his element than in the storms of the ocean. He unpacked his trunks, and resumed his pen. The story has been doubted, and we ourselves do not believe it: but it affords his panegyrist an occasion to remind us of *Oliver Cromwell* about to sail for New England, when turned back by a proclamation of the royalty that he was destined to overthrow. M. Sainte-Beuve candidly adds that he does not compare Adolphe Thiers to Oliver Cromwell; though, '*bon gré, mal gré, ce souvenir saute tout d'abord à l'esprit.*' By one of those turns of fortune which revolutions only can produce, and the hope of which has been the chief incentive of all the revo-

lutions of France, M. Thiers, as *Minister*, gave Captain Laplace a complimentary dinner on his return from this expedition, which M. Thiers had (according to M. Sainte-Beuve) so narrowly and for himself so luckily escaped.

But M. Thiers' revived zeal, and the importance of the crisis, now required another and more vehement organ than the measured, and somewhat monotonous essayism of the *Constitutionnel;* and with funds supplied from the same source as all the other expenses of this opposition, '*les sommités financières de la Gauche*,' —that is, M. Lafitte—he, with his old friend Mignet, and a younger and more dashing one, Armand Carrel, founded the *National*. The principles and character of Carrel reflect some light on those of his associate. Educated in the Royal Military School of St. Cyr, he was remarked for his early turbulence. In 1819 he joined the army as a sub-lieutenant, and being in garrison at Béfort, became involved in the military conspiracy of 1822, in which Lafayette and the *Comité directeur* of Paris were so seriously implicated. On this occasion Carrel withdrew or was removed from the army; and on the French invasion of Spain he joined the Spanish insurgents, and served under Mina against his own countrymen. Being taken prisoner in the course of this affair, he was tried and twice condemned to death, but the sentences were successively set aside for technical irregularities; and on a third trial, as is usual in such cases, indulgence prevailed, and he was acquitted. He then came to Paris, and fell into the same course of literature, and, we suppose, under the same patronage, as Thiers and Mignet. He was a regular contributor to the *Constitutionnel*, and published abridgments of the Histories of Scotland and Modern Greece; and in more direct furtherance of the grand conspiracy, a *History of the Counter-revolution in England under Charles II. and James II.* This work was suppressed by the Government, and we have never seen it; but we presume it was an amplification of the heads of our preceding synopsis. When the July revolution removed Thiers and Mignet to ministerial office, Carrel was rewarded, more obscurely and scantily, with a secret mission into Belgium, and was subsequently offered a *préfecture*. These, we believe, seemed to him an inadequate recompense, and he continued in the chief direction of the *National*, in which he showed not a little mortification and *dépit* at the inconsistency and ingratitude of the Citizen-Monarchy; and

in 1838 was killed in a half personal, half journalist duel by M. Emile Girardin, who had just started *La Presse*, at half the usual price of its contemporaries.

The earlier days of the *National*, to which we must return, were brilliant and successful. M. Thiers' conception of his subject and object—the *principle*, so to call it, of his warfare—was as sagacious as its execution was bold and able. It was to paralyze the Government, and push it eventually to its own destruction, by affecting to lay down as the inexorable and only rule for the conduct of affairs—'the Charter—the *whole* Charter, and *nothing but* the Charter;' to employ against the Government every power and means that were not expressly forbidden in the Charter, and to deny them every power and means of resistance that were not specifically recognized. 'Confine,' said M. Thiers, 'these Bourbons within the four walls of their Charter; shut the doors, stop the chimneys, and we shall soon force them to jump out of the windows.' This was logical; it was bringing to practical proof Mr. Burke's philosophical objections to *pen-and-ink* constitutions, whose theories can never provide for the incalculable contingencies of human affairs; but it is equally applicable to the Charter of Louis-Philippe,* or any other extemporized paper constitution, as to that of Louis XVIII.; and it is, in fact, the best excuse that can be made for Charles X. and his ministers; for it is an admission on the part of M. Thiers that government, under such a formula as '*nothing but the Charter*,' was impracticable. So M. Thiers himself found it when he became, under the revised Charter, Louis-Philippe's minister. The *mitraille* of St. Méry, the bloody scenes of the Rue Transnonain, and the '*laws of September*,' forced on the new monarchy by the ungovernable violence of its former partizans, now become its victims, were no more than successful imitations of what the Ministry of Charles X. had been driven to attempt, without having either head or hand to

* 'Oui; après deux ans de règne, Louis-Philippe a déchiré la Charte aussi manifestement que Charles X., et bien plus manifestement encore, car il l'a déchirée après la révolution, après l'introduction dans la Charte de dispositions destinées à prévenir de pareilles violations.'—*Cabet, Hist. de* 1830, p. 181. M. Thiers, no doubt, sees a great difference between the cases; but the insurrection against Charles X.—the *dénouement* of the *comédie de quinze ans*—seems to us to differ only in degree, and not at all in principle, from the various insurrections against Louis-Philippe; indeed, the latter seem in one respect more excusable, as they had the example of the *July* insurrection for attempting to take the law into their own hands.

execute. We have never changed our opinion on the extreme rashness and folly—fool-hardiness alternating with faint-heartedness—of the Polignac Government; but the best excuse we can find for it is the sagacious principle on which M. Thiers conducted, as journalist, the opposition of the *National*, and the energetic measures by which he subsequently, as minister, quelled the insurrections of his former friends, associates, and admirers. M. Thiers is the best apologist for M. de Polignac.*

The *National* had a large share in preparing men's minds for a change; but on the appearance of the *Ordonnances* M. Thiers took a more active part in deciding the new Revolution. The Ordonnances on their first appearance produced little effect, and would probably not have occasioned an insurrection, but that the editors of the newspapers whose presses were next morning seized were convoked at the office of the *National*, where they agreed to and signed the celebrated protest drawn up by M. Thiers, which was instantly printed and published all over Paris, and became the immediate signal for revolt. Then came the *Three Days*—during which, as in the beginning of the Revolution, the working hands showed so much courage in the streets, and their instigators so much doubt and hesitation—not to say personal weakness—in their councils. M. Thiers himself, though he had had the courage to set fire to the train, did not wait for the explosion. We should have expected from his temper, his energy, and the peculiar taste which he professes for military affairs, to have seen him prominent in the conflict which he had taken so forward a part in exciting. But no!—Immediately after signing the protest he retired to Montmorency, a village a few miles from Paris, and did not re-appear till early on the morning of the 30th, when the victory had been won, and when Deputies and Journalists were seen hastening from their respective *retreats* to divide the spoil. This part of M. Thiers' history no longer reminds M. Sainte-Beuve of *Oliver Cromwell*, and he jumps *à pieds joints* over the Three Great Days—with a dexterity worthy of the historical school which he eulogises:—

"M. Thiers' conduct *in* these critical and decisive moments, from the 26th to the 31st July, may be comprised in two facts—he con-

* Still more recent events, Feb. 1848, and Dec. 1850, should be taken into account in any impartial view of the policy of M. de Polignac.—1855.

tributed *more* than any one to the *opening* act—the protest—and *as much* as any one to the *closing* one.'

This mode of covering M. Thiers' latebration *during* the *Three Days*—by 'comprising his conduct in two facts,' which occurred, one *before* and the other *after* them, is admirable. In regular war it would be very presumptuous and foolish for a civilian, accidentally present, to intrude his co-operation—and even in his History, M. Thiers would have escaped some strange blunders if he had been less confident in his own military skill—but in such a conflict as that of the *Three Days*, and under his very peculiar circumstances, M. Thiers' absence from a resistance which he had so directly instigated, reminds us, involuntarily, of the '*relictâ non bene parmulâ*' of another little Epicurean—for whom, however, it may be said that *Horace* never professed to be Brutus, nor ventured to criticise the campaigns of Cæsar. This circumstance is rendered the more *piquant*, by M. Thiers' own observations on '*Robespierre's* having—during the *three days* of the insurrection of the 10th of August—*stood aside* (*resté à l'écart*) till the revolution had been accomplished; and then coming forward to claim the merit and recompense of the victory, of which he had been the trumpeter, not the soldier.' This is certainly a curious coincidence:—M. Thiers little thought that he was anticipating his own history under the name of Robespierre!

We do not, however, attribute M. Thiers' disappearance to a want of physical courage—neither his countrymen in general, nor those particularly of the province to which he belongs, have ever been deficient in personal bravery, and M. Thiers in some subsequent *émeutes*, in which he happened to be personally exposed, showed sufficient firmness. We attribute it rather to political prudence—a ramification of the same system which induced the Duke of Orleans to retire, at the same period, to a summer-house in his park. There were, in our view, three parties to the July movement. First, the Republicans and the mob, who thought of nothing but the overthrow of the existing authority:—these took the field thoughtlessly, instinctively, and boldly. Secondly, the Constitutional Conservatives—at the head of whom were the Duke de Broglie and M. Guizot, and, with a shade more of democracy, Casimir Perier;—their wishes did not go beyond a change of ministry, or *perhaps*, by way of guarantee, an abdication of Charles X. in favour of the Duke of Bordeaux:—naturally and rationally disapproving of so

violent a proceeding as the *ordonnances*, they would have preferred a parliamentary solution, and therefore regretted the insurrection, or at least its extent and violence, and to the last possible moment would have gladly compromised the dispute. Thirdly, Lafitte and his satellites, Thiers, &c., who may be called the Orleanists—who had prepared the mischief, and assembled, bribed, and intoxicated the populace, but, doubtful both of their cause and of *their candidate*, kept aloof, watching events and waiting their opportunity. It seems to us that they were playing the same game as the Orleanists of the first Revolution. They had calculated on just so much commotion as should intimidate the King into a transfer of the crown to the Duke of Orleans, and were surprised and alarmed to find that the populace, victorious beyond calculation or expectation, was not very ready to devolve the sovereign power, of which it had—to the tune of '*à bas les Bourbons*'—possessed itself, upon the first Prince of the Bourbon blood. Our reviews of the works of Sarrans, Mazas, Bérard, and Bonnellier * have informed our readers of the difficulty that M. Lafitte eventually found in accomplishing his object; and it may have been, and probably was, this uncertainty that determined M. Thiers' triduan retreat into the valley of Montmorency. Fortunately, however, for France and the world, a strange combination of accident, common sense, and legerdemain, placed Louis-Philippe on the throne of those whom, however, he did not dare to call his *ancestors*; and after some ministerial experiments at a more comprehensive administration, M. Lafitte was declared first minister with a cabinet of his democratic friends. M. Thiers was at once admitted into the Conseil d'Etat and the Legion of Honour, and soon after became Under Secretary of State for the Finance Department—while his Pylades, M. Mignet—

'after the remarkable days that overthrew the Restoration, received the rewards to which his enlightened liberalism—his talents and his patriotism justly entitle him:—He is a Counsellor of State extraordinary—Director of the Archives of the Foreign Department—and decorated with the Star of the Legion of Honour.'—*Biog. des Contemporains, tit. Mignet.*

Of M. Thiers' brilliant career we shall say no more than is

* Quarterly Review, Sarrans, vol. xlviii. p. 523; Mazas, vol. xlix. p. 464; Bérard, vol. lii. p. 262; Bonnellier, vol. lv. p. 416.

necessary to our view of his literary character. He was immediately elected to the Chamber by his native Department, the Bouches du Rhône—but his first speeches were not successful. His appearance was mean, and his voice disagreeable; and the tone and temper of his harangues seemed, says one of his biographers, 'copied from the Convention:—the violence of his doctrine frightened the moderate; the bombast* of his style offended everybody.' He, however, soon discovered his double error, and began to moderate his opinions and improve his rhetoric. When, after a four months' ministry, M. Lafitte was dismissed by the wise, and indeed necessary, ingratitude of Louis-Philippe, M. Thiers was subjected to much obloquy for not following his friend and patron into opposition: instead of which he took occasion to express his strong dissent from his former associates, and to applaud the prudential policy of Casimir Perier. With an equal share of sagacity and versatility, he knew, as well as the Roman patriot, that

> There is a tide in the affairs of men,
> Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;

and he turned his knowledge to better account than poor Brutus, by throwing himself boldly into the inviting current of royal favour. It was, we think, on the question of the hereditary peerage that he first distinguished himself as an orator:—he took, contrary to all expectation and in opposition to the whole course of his life, the aristocratic side, and made a speech of mingled argument and eloquence that at once established his character as a speaker, and opened to him immediately the Cabinet, and eventually, twice over, the Presidency of the Council. As a minister, we have already stated that he was now as vigorous and decided in suppressing incendiary articles in the press and revolutionary movements in the streets, as he had been while a journalist zealous in provoking them; and he showed on all occasions a flexibility of principle, a levity of personal conduct, a contempt for political consistency, with a firmness of purpose and a power of debate, which created more of wonder than respect, more conviction of his talents than confidence in his principles or esteem for his cha-

* Our own impression was that the fault of his early oratory might be called vagueness and confusion rather than *bombast*.

racter. He proposed, for instance, severe laws against unauthorized assemblages; and resisted with great pertinacity the amnesty for political offences—towards both of which the author of the meeting and *protest* of the Journalists on the 26th of July might have been expected to show some sympathy. He was close to Louis-Philippe at the Fieschi *attentat*, and, elevated perhaps by the noble example of the King, showed on that occasion no deficiency in personal courage;—he defended with more than his usual zeal and ability the unconstitutional and rigorous but necessary laws of September; and signalised himself in forwarding the erection of the sixteen Bastilles,* which replace on the whole circumference of Paris the single and inoffensive bugbear whose capture and destruction he so triumphantly celebrates. His constant expression while minister used to be, '*Nous sommes le ministère de la résistance*,' that is, in opposition to the *movement* party, of which he had been the chief trumpeter.

We must for a moment interrupt our political narrative to state that, a year or two after his appointment as Minister of the Interior, M. Thiers was elected into the French Academy:—This, however, considering that his History of the *Revolution* had been eight or ten years published, and that in the mean time such men as Pongerville and Viennet, Jay and Tissot had been elected—this, we say, looks as if the compliment had been paid rather to the *minister* than the *historian*. Indeed there is this peculiarity in M. Thiers' literary history, that, whereas in most cases the success of a book makes the reputation of the writer, in *his* the success of the writer has made the reputation of the book.

But while M. Thiers was thus ready to advocate, adopt, and enforce a repressive and even despotic system of internal administration, he was not insensible to the decline of his popularity, and endeavoured to retrieve it by the aggressive violence of his foreign policy, and by not only pandering to, but actively exciting the worst passions and prejudices of the French people. As the surest mode of regaining the favour of the movement party, he endeavoured to revive the revolutionary fever of hostility to England; and was, in 1840, on the point of indulging the Jacobins

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* It seems surprising that in the revolt of February, 1848, no use should have been made of these strongholds, so well fitted, and (as it was thought) so prudently contrived, to defeat such attempts; but the truth is that Louis-Philippe was taken as much by surprise as Charles X. had been.—1855.

and Buonapartists with a new struggle against the '*perfide Albion*.' *War*, in short, a revolutionary war, was now the *programme* of M. Thiers:—so says a writer whom that very design has evidently propitiated—

'That is the predominant idea of M. Thiers—the great object to which all his political alliances and all his parliamentary policy are now subordinate. "There must be," he lately said, "another twenty years' war in Europe before it can be settled on its true basis, and *I hope that I shall live to make at least half of it.*" When that time comes, we shall probably see that he again will be found the man of the crisis.'—*Gal. des Hom. Illus.*

In adopting and pursuing this course, M. Thiers was probably influenced by a combination of motives:—first, his natural inclinations (we cannot call them principles) are revolutionary—secondly, he was the more inclined to take this line because his rival, M. Guizot, had adopted, with all the firmness and consistency of his pure, and honourable character, the conservative and peaceful line of policy for France and for Europe—and thirdly, because, foreseeing that he could not long, as the proverb says, 'run with the hare and hold with the hound,' M. Thiers was, in prudent anticipation of a difference with the King, preparing the elements of a reunion with the popular and agitating party. His previsions were accomplished; he has ceased to be the King's minister, and has now, we believe, pretty well regained—not the confidence—no one has anything like confidence in him—but the co-operation of the party which he had not only abandoned, but for a season persecuted.

We said we should only deal with M. Thiers' political life as it affected his authorship; and some of our readers, who have not minutely watched M. Thiers' proceedings and publications, may ask what then all this detail has to do with his Histories? We answer, a great deal—everything:—the fruit of his involuntary leisure has been the 'History of the Consulate;' and we are convinced that—as his first History was written in a spirit of hostility to the elder Bourbons, with probably some ulterior view to the elevation of the Duke of Orleans—so this second History is written, not in fact from any love of Buonaparte's principles or memory, but to electrify France with a galvanic exhibition of his false glory—to collect round M. Thiers all the old malcontents and all the young enthusiasts, and, renouncing Louis-Philippe as *quasi-legitimate*, to amalgamate—in opposition to him, M. Guizot,

and the Conservative party throughout Europe—all the various discontents and ambitions that may choose to adopt the recollections of either the Republic or the Empire as their stalking-horse of faction.*. The *History of the Consulate* is therefore as decidedly a political manœuvre as the *History of the Revolution;*—it is, we admit, a soberer work; the political position that M. Thiers had acquired afforded him opportunities of better information, and imposed on him more public responsibility, but it is still grossly inaccurate and partial, and influenced by personal views and motives; and we do not believe that there is in Europe any politician or any man of letters at all acquainted with public affairs, who regards either of these works in any other light than as—what Lord Brougham is said to have called them—'*pamphlets monstres.*'

Having thus stated what we believe to be the real motives and objects of these publications and their author, we shall now commence our examination of the first of them in its historical character.

Of a work so extensive—of which every line betrays a fraudulent spirit, and every page some perversion of fact—which, by a complication of petty artifice and by the accumulation of discoloured details, has arrived at the dignity of being the most monstrous system of deception that, we believe, the annals of literature can exhibit—of such a work, we say, it is obviously impossible that the limits of a review can afford any sufficient exposure, or anything like a pedetentous refutation:—a lie is conveyed by a word, or even by the omission of a word, which it would take pages to disprove; or it may be spread over an extensive surface like a varnish, which it would be endless to endeavour to pick off bit by bit:—and yet we feel it to be absolutely necessary that we should support our heavy charge against M. Thiers by distinct evidence, which may, as far as it goes, wash off the foul matter like a solvent, and satisfy our readers that it would have the same effect if applied to the parts to which we have not room to extend it. Had we time and space in any proportion to the abundance of our materials, the task would be easy enough—the proofs overflow; our only difficulty is the *embarras du choix;* and the danger, on the one hand, of prolixity and tediousness—or, on the other, of

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* I beg to remind my readers that this was written in 1845, and to refer them to the history of the few following years for its illustration.—1855.

being charged with the blunder of the Greek Pedant in producing a brick or two as a specimen of his house. We shall endeavour to avoid these opposite dangers, and yet to do substantial justice to the case, by taking—we cannot call it *choosing*—for special examination some of those events and passages, whose transcendent prominence and importance would naturally require and excite M. Thiers' best diligence and highest talents, and which every reader will allow to be the most obvious, and, to the historian, the most favourable, tests that could be adopted; and at least above all suspicion of being, by us, invidiously selected.

Before we enter into details, we must, in order that our readers may understand their import and effect, apprise them generally of the *tactics* by which M. Thiers conducts his narrative. He was well aware that former Jacobin writers had defeated their own purpose by their blind violence and incredible calumnies. Many recent publications, and a calmer retrospect of all the facts, had conciliated public opinion towards Louis XVI. and the still more slandered Queen, and had dissipated the monstrous delusions under which these innocent, and now lamented victims, had been dethroned and murdered. M. Thiers' own sagacity, or perhaps the prudence of the bookseller for whom the goods were originally manufactured, saw that though *Ça ira* and the *Carmagnole* might still make a riot in the streets, they would not, in the year 1823, sell a work of ten volumes octavo. Men's minds had gradually recovered—under the severe though opposite disciplines of the Republic and the Empire—from revolutionary delusions, and were shocked at revolutionary recollections; and it was clear that a revival of revolutionary principles could be neither politically nor commercially successful, unless accompanied and recommended by some profession and appearance of candour and justice. This idea, however, was more wise in the conception than easy in the execution; for, in truth, the whole Revolution was, from beginning to end, such a mass of fraud, tyranny, cruelty, and *terror*, that anything like real candour or substantial justice was quite incompatible with the apologetical design. M. Thiers' principles, temper, and time of life made the mask of moderation peculiarly awkward and irksome to him;—and accordingly nothing can be more flimsy and ill-sustained than his pretence of impartiality and fair dealing. If he states anything favourable to the Royalist party, he never fails to throw in some

doubt of its truth, some suspicion of its motive, or some counterbalancing merit in their opponents. On the other hand, when he is forced to describe some crime of the Revolutionists, it is in a mitigated and apologetical tone: the unhappy *necessity* is deplored, but asserted; its cause is traced back to those whose resistance produced it; and the Royalists are everywhere implicated, by some strange legerdemain, in all the atrocities committed against themselves by their Jacobin persecutors. In short, during the whole course of the Revolution the Royalists never did any one thing that was unexceptionally right—nor the Revolutionists any one thing that was inexcusably wrong.

This is the leading principle and constant effort of the whole work, as it was of M. Mignet's—*suggestio falsi—suppressio veri.* Of the mode in which M. Thiers elaborates it, we now proceed to give a few prominent examples.

We shall begin with his representations of the conduct of Louis XVI. and Marie-Antoinette, *Egalité*-Orleans, and incidentally M. de la Fayette—the main and most important topics of his earlier volumes. He felt himself, as we have said, forced, by the state of public opinion and the notorious evidence of facts, to admit—which he does, however, like a reluctant and equivocating witness—the King's benevolent disposition, good intentions, and when the Constitution was established, his constitutional and conscientious execution of his duties; and he does something of the same sort of lame and imperfect justice to the Queen. This looks at first sight like a gleam of candour—but not at all—it is only a *faux-fuyant*—a device to enable him with more effect, and less risk of offence or of direct contradiction, to calumniate the victims whom he professes to absolve; for while he seems to acquit *them* individually, he collects and repeats all the lies and libels of those dismal times, as against an imaginary 'COURT.' Now every man of common sense and common information must know that this phantom of a Court, as distinct from the King, is not only absurd in theory, but contradicted by every kind of evidence. The poor King was not only scrupulously cautious to do nothing but in communication with his responsible ministers, but in truth there was—at the period at which these calumnies about 'the perfidious machinations of the Court' were most rife—no such thing as a *Court*—no persons of such a class as could furnish secret political

advisers, even had the King been bold enough to consult them. The first massacres in July, 1789, had driven into emigration most of the personal friends and favourites of both the King and Queen—the 5th and 6th October, which led them captives to the Tuileries, completed their destitution, and there remained near their persons no one of any political weight or consequence who could have ventured to advise the King, much less—as M. Thiers sometimes asserts, and more frequently insinuates—to control and overbear him. This M. Thiers, with that inconsistency from which falsehood can never entirely guard itself, incidently admits. As early as the close of 1789 he confesses the very fact we have just stated:—

'There was no longer any possibility of attempting any serious conspiracy in favour of the King, since the *aristocracy had been put to flight*, and the *Court* was encompassed by the Assembly, the People, and the National Guards.'

And yet after this confession he continues, even more glibly than before, his insinuations against the counter-revolutionary conspiracies of the *Court*.

And here we have to notice one of the many variations between M. Thiers' first and subsequent editions—small but significant. In his first edition (i. 200) M. Thiers had said that the aristocracy had been '*chassée*,' *driven out by force**—which was quite true; but M. Thiers on reconsideration felt that this truth would have exculpated the *Emigration*, and he altered '*chassée*' into '*éloignée*.'

We have, indeed, a striking and melancholy proof of how early the King was deprived of anything that could be called a *Court* even in the least invidious sense of the word. Three days after the capture of the Bastille the King was advised to make his celebrated and humiliating visit to the Hôtel de Ville in Paris, in which the newly elected mayor, Bailly, insulted him, even in the presentation of the keys of the city. He returned 'heart-broken' to Versailles, whither M. de Bezenval, General of the Swiss Guards, who had commanded the troops in the late crisis, but had now resigned his military command, followed him, unbidden, and he has left us the following short

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* CHASSER, *mettre dehors par violence.*'—*Dictionnaire de l'Académie.*

but affecting statement of what he then witnessed at the *Court* of Versailles:—

'The unhappy King on his return to Versailles found himself *almost alone*. For three whole days there was no one near him but M. de Montmorin [one of the ministers] and me [who had no official character]. Even his menial attendants waited upon him with disrespectful negligence, and I myself was a witness of this insolence.' —*Mém. de Bezenval*, ii. 568.

And so early and so entirely was the 'unhappy King' convinced of the perils of his own situation, and his total want of power to protect any one who was attached to him, that he forced M. de Bezenval to leave Versailles and to seek his safety in a hasty retreat to his native country. Such was the *Court* which the pages of M. Thiers represent as being at this very time in formidable activity against the safety of Paris which was garrisoned by 60,000 new-raised National Guards, and the liberties of France which was in a state of triumphant anarchy from Dunkirk to Marseilles.

There is one great fact which, if M. Thiers had given himself the least trouble about either historical truth or logical consistency, would have warned him, as it must convince all the rest of mankind, that his device of seeming to separate the innocent King from the guilty *Court* is, by the admission of his own idols, utterly futile. *The King was executed* for the very circumstances imputed by M. Thiers to the *Court!*—and Messrs. Vergniaud and Guadet—'*courageux nobles et illustres citoyens*,' as M. Thiers delights to call them—and his Highness Citizen and Prince Cambacérès '*homme savant et sage*,' and Citizen and Count Carnot '*homme probe et courageux*,' and Citizen and Count Treilhard '*honnête homme réunissant les lumières à la probité*,' and Letourneur '*bon homme*,' and Lareveillière Lepeaux '*le plus honnête et le meilleur des hommes*,' and so many others of M. Thiers' transcendent specimens of talents, probity, and justice, who all voted for the death of the King, made no such exculpatory distinction, and sent *him* to the scaffold as guilty of those imaginary crimes which M. Thiers—not now daring to produce against him personally, and yet reluctant to disavow his 'illustrious' regicides—imputes to the phantom *Court*.

But may not the *Queen* be suspected of having favoured coun-

ter-revolutionary intrigues, and might not she be aptly designated as the *Court*, in contradistinction to the King? This M. Thiers, though he does not venture directly to affirm, often insinuates; but here we have abundant evidence that the Queen never separated herself from the determinations of the King. The testimony of two constitutional ministers, Dumouriez and Bertrand de Moleville, unquestionable on this point, as M. Thiers admits—that of Madame Campan, not so authoritative, but as authentic—leave, as he professes, *even in his mind* no doubt of the Queen's participation in the conciliatory and constitutional views of her husband. We ourselves have heard from Dumouriez, in many frank and confidential conversations, his full conviction of the sincerity and good faith of both the King and Queen, and the utter falsehood and nonsense of all the imputations of the secret and interior *Court* and the imaginary 'conspiracies against the people' with which the agitations of Paris were at the moment excited and fed.*

The Feuillants, or Constitutional party—Lafayette, Lameth, &c.—wished, says M. Thiers,—

'to save the King without altering the Constitution. *Their means were feeble.* In the first place, the *Court* that they wished to save would not be saved by them. The Queen, who readily gave her confidence to Barnave [a reclaimed Jacobin, now a Constitutionalist], had always taken the greatest precautions in seeing him, and never received him but in secret. *The Emigrants and the Court* would never have forgiven her for even seeing a Constitutionalist. *They* in fact *advised* her not to treat with them, and rather to prefer the Jacobins,' &c.

Here then we have *a Court* in contradistinction not only to the

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* On the subject of the King's scrupulous observance of the Constitution, we can add an original, and, we think, curious anecdote. After the death of M. Rœderer, his books were sold by auction, and amongst them was the historical work of M. Maton de Varennes, of which Rœderer had made great use in the compilation of his own '*Chronique.*' In the margin he had made several MS. notes, and one of them—on a passage in which Maton observes on the King's observance of the constitution (p. 55)—ran as follows:—'*Eh! le pauvre Sire; il la portait toujours en poche, et la produisait quelquefois avec une naïveté pitoyable.*' This anecdote is doubly curious when we recollect that Rœderer was one of the chief manufacturers of this absurd constitution, and afterwards one of the superior magistrates named to execute it. We shall see hereafter (*Essay IV.*) how *he* performed this duty.—1855.

King, but *the Queen* also—a *Court* that, in league with the Emigrants, never would *forgive the Queen* for even seeing a Constitutionalist; and for this extraordinary statement M. Thiers refers us, in a marginal note, to the Memoirs of Madame Campan. We turned to the passage with eagerness: we supposed that at last we were about to learn who and what this mysterious *Court* could be, that thus, *in concert with the Emigrants*, overawed the constitutional dispositions of the Queen. We found in Madame Campan no mention of—not the slightest allusion to—*the Court*, nor anything like it. She speaks of the *Emigrants* alone, and does *not* say that they advised the Queen, or that the Queen listened (as M. Thiers himself admits she did not) to their advice. What Madame Campan does say is simply that—

'the Emigrants showed [*faisaient entrevoir*] great apprehensions of any approaches towards the Constitutional party, which they described as existing only in idea, and having no longer the means of repairing the mischief they had done; they would have preferred the Jacobins,' &c.—*Mém. de Campan.*

Not a word about the *Court*—and the opinion concerning the Feuillant party thus attributed to the Emigrants is precisely that which M. Thiers himself had just said, 'that *their means were too feeble;*' and which he reiterates immediately after in almost the same words, 'the *feebleness of their means* of making head against the Revolutionists.'

The sequel of this affair is an additional proof of M. Thiers' bad faith and self-contradiction. The King having been forced, in March, 1792, to replace a Feuillant ministry by a Jacobin one, Lafayette came forward to support his displaced friends by writing a kind of dictatorial manifesto to the Assembly, in which he denounced the proceedings and objects of the Jacobins. Of this celebrated, foolish, and, as it turned out, unfortunate letter, M. Thiers (now a flatterer of Lafayette) gives large extracts; but, by a petty trick habitual to him, and indeed to all falsifiers, he chooses to suppress the *date* both of *time* and *place*—circumstances essential to any letter, but on which, in respect to *this* letter, everything turned. It was, in fact, dated '16*th June*, 1792, *from the intrenched camp at Maubeuge;*' and the indignation it produced in the Assembly arose on two main points: it was urged, in the first place, that it was most unconstitutional and dangerous that a General at the head of an army should presume to lecture the National

Assembly—and, secondly—on which ground indeed they affected to treat it as a forgery—though dated at *Maubeuge on the 16th*, it began by alluding to the resignation of Dumouriez, which had happened *in Paris* only *that same day*—the 16th. These two egregious blunders of his hero, Lafayette, M. Thiers thinks that he in some degree veils by *suppressing* the dates. But he had also another object—still more fraudulent. The letter was dated the 16th; read in the Assembly on the 18th—on the 19th it occasioned the greatest agitation in Paris, and it became the pretext of the infamous Girondin attack on the Tuileries of the following day, the celebrated *20th of June*. It was necessary to M. Thiers' system of calumny to implicate in some way the King and Queen in these ill-managed proceedings of Lafayette and their lamentable consequences, and he thus goes about it:—

'The Feuillants *got about* Lafayette, and concerted with him the draft of a letter to the Assembly. His friends were divided on this subject—some excited, others dissuaded. But he, only thinking of how to serve the King to whom he had sworn fidelity, wrote the letter, and braved all the dangers which were about to threaten his life.'

Now there is nothing in M. Thiers' relation to explain that all this might not have happened *at Paris*—though, obviously, whoever got about (*entourat*) Lafayette, must have been at *Maubeuge;* and then M. Thiers reaches the real object of all this manœuvring:—

'The King and the Queen (though resolved not to avail themselves of his services) *allowed him* to write the letter, because they *were delighted to see the friends of liberty at variance.*'

Thus creating an impression that the King and Queen were in personal communication with Lafayette, and encouraged him to write the letter—not expecting or intending that it should do any good—but with the perfidious design of injuring their gallant defender and rendering him suspicious and odious to the friends of liberty! And the better to carry on this fraud, M. Thiers makes another remarkable suppression. The King was really so far from having had any share in this letter to the Assembly, that Lafayette thought it necessary to send his Majesty *a copy* of it in a private letter, which Bertrand de Moleville has preserved, but which M. Thiers *totally suppresses*—and for two reasons—first, because it disproves any treacherous intrigue on the part of the

King as to the first letter; and also because it bears testimony to the honest and constitutional dispositions of the calumniated monarch.

Even while forced in all substantial cases to admit the King's personal sincerity, he takes the opportunity of every obscure or doubtful incident to insinuate a suspicion of perfidy—and sometimes draws this ingenious conclusion from facts that should have had a quite contrary effect. For instance—towards the close of 1789, he says that

'the King would not recall his Gardes-du-corps, who had been removed on the 5th and 6th of October, and preferred to intrust himself to the National Guard.'

What could be more prudent or more natural? If the King had been so rash and so unfeeling as to bring forward again those of the Gardes-du-corps who had escaped the massacre of the 6th of October, what charges of conspiracy and perfidy would not the revolutionists of the time have raised, and M. Thiers reiterated? —a new massacre must have been the inevitable result. But 'the King confided himself to the National Guards'—the soldiers of the people. Has M. Thiers no expression of approbation for that conciliatory sacrifice of the royal feeling? Quite the contrary: he proceeds to throw over the King's humane reluctance to expose the Gardes-du-corps to fresh danger, and his misplaced confidence in the National Guard, the most odious discolour:—

'*His design was to appear a prisoner.* The Municipality of Paris defeated this *paltry trick* (*trop petite ruse*) by begging the King to recall his Gardes-du-corps—which he still refused, under *idle pretexts*, and *through the medium of the Queen.*'

To appear a prisoner? Alas! who but M. Thiers ever doubted that ever since the 5th of October he was one? The fear of a new massacre of the Gardes-du-corps is called a '*paltry trick*' and an '*idle pretext*,' on no other authority than M. Lafayette's having, as he said, seen *one* of those gentlemen walking in the Palais Royal in uniform; as if (supposing that small fact to be true, which we entirely disbelieve *) a single person venturing to wear an old uniform proved that the whole body-guard would have been allowed to resume the custody of the King, and deprive the National Guards of the posts which they had usurped amidst the

* See post, p. 82.

butchery of the 6th of October! But cannot M. Thiers imagine that, besides these cogent reasons, the King might have a constitutional reluctance to acknowledge the humiliating authority that M. Lafayette and the Municipality of Paris thus assumed to exercise over his household? And then, that the Queen might, as usual, be implicated in this perfidy, it is said that the King employed her—'*à laquelle* ON [we suppose the *Court*] *confiait les commissions difficiles*'—as the medium of his communications; when in truth it appears, even by M. Thiers' own explanatory note, that *M. de Lafayette* had made the proposition to the *Queen*, and of course received the answer through the medium that *he*, and not the King, had chosen. And, finally, after thus making this a direct and personal charge against the King and Queen, he falls back upon his old device of secret and anonymous advisers, and tells us that the King and Queen would have accepted the proposition, but that 'ON *leur fit refuser*,' &c. There assuredly needed no adviser to enable any person of the most ordinary understanding to see that such a proposition could have had no other prospect than that of a new and general massacre, and an earlier and more complete overthrow of the monarchy. M. Thiers, in thus attempting to calumniate the King and Queen, has in truth produced against his friend and patron Lafayette one of the heaviest charges, either of deplorable folly or detestable treachery, that ever yet had been made against him.

Another case bearing on nearly the same points affords an instance of still more flagitious falsehood:—

'On the 18th of April [1791],' says M. Thiers, 'the King attempted to pay a visit to St. Cloud. It was immediately reported that, being unwilling to employ a priest who had taken the oath [to the new constitution of the clergy], he had determined to absent himself during Easter week. Others declared that he designed to make his escape. The people assembled in crowds and stopped his horses. Lafayette hastened to his rescue, entreated the King *to remain in his carriage*, and assured him that he was about to open a passage for his departure. The King, however, *according to his old policy of not appearing free*, got out of the carriage, and would not permit him to make the attempt.'

Now the fact is, that Lafayette (whether sincerely or collusively we know not) did make the attempt, and totally failed. 'The very soldiers he had brought to protect the King's passage,' says

Bertrand de Moleville, 'turned against him.' But admitting that he did all that he could do, his efforts only proved his own want of power: the feeble voice of the popular general was drowned in the vociferations of the mob; and although M. de Lafayette *offered*, if the King should persist in going, to endeavour to force a passage at *the risk of his life*, the King (as the General might and probably did anticipate) declined a conflict of which he and his wife and children—*whose presence in the besieged carriages M. Thiers fraudulently conceals*—would no doubt have been the first victims, and—after having been *an hour and a half* in the carriage, exposed to the grossest insults, ribaldry, and menaces of the populace—was at length forced to alight. And instead of this being a dishonest trick of the King's—as M. Thiers asserts—he went next day in state to the National Assembly and complained of the outrage in these words:—

'Gentlemen—You are informed of the opposition given yesterday to my departure from St. Cloud. I was unwilling to overcome it by force, because I feared to occasion acts of severity against a misguided multitude—but it is of importance to the nation to prove that I am free. Nothing is so essential to the authority of the sanction I have given to your decrees.—Governed by this powerful motive I persist in my plan of going to St. Cloud, and the National Assembly must perceive the necessity of it.'

This appeal was as fruitless as the *forcible-feeble* efforts of Lafayette had been. The municipality of Paris decreed that the King should not go to St. Cloud*—the cowardly Assembly declined to interfere, and the humiliated monarch was as it were remanded back to his prison. The conduct of all the authorities of the day was execrable—but what can be said of M. Thiers?—what? but that his narrative is not merely calumnious, but elaborately false.

In the critical interval between the outrages of the 20th of June and the 10th of August M. Thiers says—

'It was rumoured (*on répandait*) in fact that the *Château* † was endeavouring to *provoke* the people to a second rising, in order that it might have an opportunity of slaughtering them. So that the

* Danton, on his trial, avowed that he conducted this *émeute*.

† Our readers know that *then*, as *now*, the term *Château*, meaning the royal residence, whether at Versailles or the Tuileries, was often used in an invidious sense for what in the same sense was and is also called the *Court*.—*Thiers*, ii. 177.

Château supposed that there was an intention of assassinating the King, and the Faubourgs one of massacring the people.'

Thus again endeavouring to place some imaginary conspiracy of the *Court* in the same category with the real atrocities of the 20th of June and 10th of August, and hinting, with his usual insidious inconsistency, that the aggressions of the people were prompted by an impulse of self-defence, although he in anteeedent and subsequent passages admits that both these deplorable riots were the work not of the people, but of a dozen leaders of the Gironde and Jacobin parties, who even found some difficulty in rousing the Parisian mob into the necessary state of frenzy, and were obliged to adjourn the last and decisive insurrection, at first intended for the 26th of July, to the *10th of August*, that they might have the co-operation of the bolder Marseillais.

Here is another specimen of the same masquerade of candour. When the unhappy Queen deplored the undeserved animosity of the people, M. Thiers sympathises with her in the following strain :—

'Thus, by a kind of fatality, the *supposed* ill intention of the *Château* excited the suspicions and fury of the people, and the vociferations of the people increased the sorrows and imprudences of the *Château*. Why did not the *Château* understand the fears of the people—why did not the people understand the sorrows of the *Château*—Why? but because men are men.'

To this disgusting affectation of a humane impartiality we answer No—it was because the Revolutionists were *not* men, but monsters! Sorrows there were, and fear there was—but not divided as in M. Thiers' invidious partition; the fear, as well as the sorrow, was the bitter portion of the *Château*—the people had nothing to fear, and feared nothing. Their leaders were the only conspirators, and in every case the aggressors and assailants; while the humbled and defenceless *Château* was doomed to suffer at first all the humiliation of insult, and ultimately the last excesses of outrage. We have no doubt that there may have been, must have been, about the Court—while there was a *Court*—as there was in every other class of French, as well as of European society, a diversity of opinion about the Revolution—that the Anti-revolutionists must have predominated in the Court circle—that, as the authority and person of the King were progressively assailed, insulted, and endangered, the opinions of the cour-

tiers became more unanimous—that they may have talked what M. Thiers calls 'imprudently,' and even sometimes acted imprudently. This may have been so, and no doubt any such incident would be exaggerated and promulgated by every nefarious art to inflame and ulcerate the public mind. But that anything like a conspiracy or combination against the people, or even the new order of things, was ever formed—but above all formed under any approbation or connivance of either the King or the Queen—may be most confidently denied. And what ratifies our argument is, that M. Thiers, who makes these insinuations as to secret anti-national councils on every page, never once attempts to establish them by facts; and whenever he happens to produce a fact at all approaching the subject, it is invariably found to contradict the insinuation.

In short, it seems to us that in all this portion of his work—and a most important portion it is—M. Thiers is as utterly regardless of truth, or even of *vraisemblance*, as if he were writing *La Tour de Nesle* or the *Mystères de Paris*—and we have little doubt that, if taxed in the private society of his early days with this elaborate *suggestio falsi*, the gay and *insouciant* manufacturer of M. Le Cointe's octavos would have laughed and shrugged his shoulders with a '*Mais, que voulez-vous?*—without this phantom of a *Court* I could not have carried *my panegyrical theory* of the Revolution through a single page.'

His management of the case of the unfortunate *Egalité* takes the other of the two modes of deception, on which his whole scheme proceeds—the *suppressio veri;* and as he invents, even beyond the libellists of the day, machinations for an imaginary *Court*, so, for the same purpose, he attenuates and envelops in ambiguity and doubt every indication of the real conspiracy of the Duke of Orleans. The detailed plan of his work did not allow him to get rid of the Duke of Orleans in the summary style of Mignet; but we have not been able to find a single passage in which the most serious, the most notorious, the most undeniable charges against *Egalité* are not either passed over altogether, or treated as the mere *on dits* of the town, or as the suggestions of enemies, or as accidents which, even if true, were of no substantial influence. Here are a few instances, not selected, but taken as they occur in the first pages.

The Abbé Sièyes is introduced, with his 'pamphlet' the precursor,

his 'motion' which constituted *the National Assembly*,—but not a hint is given that he had, or was supposed to have, any connexion with the Duke of Orleans—nor is any mention made of the celebrated *cahiers* of the Orleans *bailliages*, attributed to Sièyes. And why this concealment? Because it is M. Thiers', as it was M. Mignet's, and no doubt M. Lafitte's, object to represent the Duke as a giddy, dissipated, mere man of pleasure, with no plan, no party, no influence—a fly on the wheel of the Revolution;—and this hypothesis would be defeated by a confession that he was acting in close and intimate concert with 'the comprehensive, philosophical, and systematic mind of one of the greatest geniuses of the age.' (Thiers, vol. i. pp. 28, 60.) So when he first mentions the Duke of Orleans as connected with party, it is thus:—

'When parties began to form themselves, *he had suffered* his name to be employed, and even, *it is said*, his wealth also. Flattered with the *vague prospect* before him, he was active enough to draw accusations on himself, but not to ensure success; and he must have sadly distressed his partisans, *if they really had any projects*, by his inconstant ambition.'

'Inconstant ambition'—'vague prospect'—of *what?* M. Thiers does not say; and even doubts whether 'anybody had *really* any projects'! But by-and-by M. Thiers becomes a little more particular:—

'The garden of the Palais Royal, forming an appurtenance to the palace of the Duke of Orleans, was the rendezvous of the most vehement agitators; there the boldest harangues were delivered; there might be seen an orator mounted on a table collecting a crowd around him, and exciting them by the most ferocious language—language always unpunished—for there the mob reigned sovereign. Here men, *supposed* to be devoted to the Duke of Orleans, were the most forward. The wealth of that prince—his well-known prodigality—the enormous sums he borrowed—his residence on the spot—his ambition, *though vague*, all served to point accusation against him.'

Here, in spite of the qualifying and ambiguous phraseology, we have something that looks like a candid admission that there was a presumption against the Duke of Orleans; but M. Thiers makes a sharp turn, and, being unable either to conceal or deny the notorious fact that the mobs of the Palais Royal were bribed, he hastens to

throw a veil over the name of Duke of Orleans, and to rescue the immaculate Revolution from the reproach of having been in any degree influenced by these hireling agitators. The mode in which he executes this is very remarkable and admirably characteristic.

It appears, on a comparison of M. Thiers' first edition with those that followed, that he altered certain passages of his original text, and that these alterations seem chiefly designed to remove some slight traces of truth or candour which had inadvertently escaped him. We have already given one example (p. 30); but this revision is peculiarly observable in several passages relating to the delicate subject of the Duke of Orleans; and from many instances of this dishonest manipulation we submit to our readers the specimen of the case before us.

FIRST EDITION.	SUBSEQUENT EDITIONS.
'*The Historian* [*i. e.* M. Thiers himself], without mentioning any name, can at least assert that money was profusely distributed. For if the sound part of the nation was ardently desirous of liberty; if the restless and suffering multitude resorted to agitation for the sake of bettering its condition, there were instigators who excited this multitude, and who *often* directed its blows and *its pillage*. It is, certainly, not with money and secret manœuvres that one can set in movement an entire nation, *but once excited, it is often by this means that it is directed and led astray (égaré).*'	'*History*, without mentioning any name, can at least assert that money was profusely distributed. For if the sound part of the nation was ardently desirous of liberty; if the restless and suffering multitude resorted to agitation for the sake of bettering its condition, there were instigators who *sometimes* excited that multitude, and directed *perhaps some* of its blows. *In other respects this influence is not to be reckoned among the causes of the Revolution;* for it is NOT with *a little* money and with secret manœuvres that you can *convulse a nation of twenty-five millions of men.*'

Our readers see the art with which these changes are made and the object to which they are directed. In the first version the '*Historian*' admits the fact that money was instrumental in those tumults; in the second he endeavours to discredit it. In the first version he says the *Historian* himself *can assert* the fact—as if from personal investigation and conviction—in the second version he slips out of this responsibility, and turns it over to the Muse of '*History*'—'tis *Clio* and not *Thiers* that suspects the integrity of

the Duke of Orleans. In the first version he confesses 'blows and *pillage*'—but '*pillage*' would have reminded his reader of an affair which M. Thiers had, as we shall more fully see by-and-by, a strong desire to suppress—the *pillage* of the house of M. Reveillon; and so the word '*pillage*' disappears from the second version. In the first version it is said *positively* that 'there were instigators who excited and *often* directed these blows and pillage.' In the second version the positive assertion is lowered to a '*perhaps*,' '*peut-être*'—the '*often*' to '*sometimes*'—and '*the blows and pillage*' attenuated to '*some* (*quelques-uns*) *of its blows*.' And finally, the last admission, that when a nation is once in a state of excitement, money can influence and misguide it, is totally merged in an assertion of a directly opposite tendency—that 'it is NOT by *a little* money that a nation of twenty-five millions of people can be convulsed.'

We have gone into these verbal details on this point that it may serve as a specimen of the low and dishonest arts with which M. Thiers falsifies not merely the historical facts, but—when he had happened, in the hurry of early composition, to deviate into any thing like truth—his own recorded evidence and opinion. All this patching and plastering does little towards defending the Duke of Orleans; but it proves all we want to show—M. Thiers' reluctance to tell what he knows to be the truth, and the miserable shifts with which he endeavours to evade it.

But then come the 5th and 6th October, 1789, when the guilt of the Duke of Orleans became so audacious and flagrant, that even M. Thiers was forced—on pain of a complete literary discredit and commercial failure—to notice it distinctly; but he does so in a way that exhibits, most strikingly, his affected candour, mingled with his inveterate partiality and untruth. Our readers need not be reminded of the frightful yet romantic horrors of those dreadful days—the most extraordinary, and exciting, and touching scenes, we think, of the whole revolutionary tragedy. They ended —after a series of brutalities and massacres, paid for and directed by the Duke of Orleans *in person*—in the assault and capture of the palace by a mob, led by women, and *men in women's clothes*, and the carrying off the Royal Family, in bloody triumph, prisoners to Paris; the heads of the faithful Gardes-du-corps, massacred in trying to protect them, being carried in the van of the procession of murderers and furies. Yet of these fatal horrors the King and

Queen themselves were, in M. Thiers' narrative, joint projectors and accomplices.

'Public excitement was at its height; and the most sinister events were to be apprehended. A *movement* was equally desired by the People *and the Court!*—By the people, that they might seize the King's person; the *Court*, that terror might induce him to retire to Metz.'

We pause with disgust and wonder at such audacious nonsense. The *Court* desiring and assisting in the siege and sack of Versailles! We have already exposed this phantom of a *Court*. We need here only add that, of the poor and scanty remains of what had been a Court, some on that day sacrificed, with deliberate heroism, their own lives, in order that, while the mob were butchering them, the Queen might have time to escape half-naked from her bed. Others were massacred in various acts of duty. Every soul within the palace had reason to believe their last hour was come. This, forsooth, was the *Court* which invited the mob to 'frighten the King!' Next follows one of those admissions on which M. Thiers builds his reputation for candour and impartiality:—

'A movement was also desired by the Duke of Orleans, who hoped to obtain the Lieutenant-Generalship [Regency] of the kingdom, if the King should go off.' 'It *has even been said* that the Duke of Orleans went so far as to hope for the Crown; but this is hardly credible, for—'

we think no reader would have ever guessed the reason,

'for—he had not sufficient audacity of spirit for so high an ambition.'

Though M. Thiers had admitted in the preceding line that the *movement* was desired by the Duke to drive the King away, and to obtain for himself the Regency of the kingdom: surely the audacity and ambition that sufficed for the scheme that M. Thiers confesses, would have been equally adequate to the scheme he discredits. What follows is still more surprising. M. Thiers all of a sudden discovers that the Duke is totally innocent of the whole affair—of what he had planned, as well as of what he had not!

'The advantages which the Duke might expect from this new insurrection have occasioned his being accused of having *participated*

in it; but it *was no such thing.* He could not have given this impulsion—for—'

another reason which no one would ever have guessed,

'for it arose out of the *nature of things.*'

So, all M. Thiers has been propounding for the last two or three pages turns out to be mere lies or reveries. It was neither the *People*, nor the *Court*, nor the *Duke of Orleans*, that made this insurrection—not at all; it was impossible that they—and particularly *he*—could have had anything to do with it; it resulted from an altogether different and higher power—*the nature of things!*—Fudge!

But M. Thiers suspects that this solution might not be quite satisfactory; and then he produces another scrap of candour:—

'The utmost the Duke of Orleans could have had to do with it was to forward (*seconder*) it; and even in that view, the *immense judicial inquiry which afterwards ensued*, and time, which reveals all things, *afford no trace of any concerted plan.*'

What! though he himself had just told us that the People had a plan of seizing the King, and the Court another, of frightening, and the Duke a third, of dethroning him?

But the assertion that the Duke of Orleans did not '*participate*' in this movement, and that 'the *immense judicial inquiry afforded no trace of any concerted plan*'—is as daring and monstrous a misrepresentation as we have ever seen in print. All the arts, the powers, and the audacity of the Revolutionary party were employed to protract, embarrass, and stifle that inquiry—but in spite of their efforts the main facts were put beyond doubt. Upwards of three hundred witnesses spoke to a vast variety of the incidents connected with these long and mysterious machinations, and established by a thousand concurrent facts that there was a conspiracy against the King—that the Duke of Orleans paid for and countenanced, and even personally directed it—and that the object was the Regency or even the Throne for him, according as events might turn out. We shall produce half a dozen of this cloud of witnesses—whose evidence is beyond all question, and who state in general terms what all the rest support by innumerable details.

First, M. Mounier, a *liberal*, one of the men of '89—who was President of the National Assembly during those eventful days

and, as M. Thiers admits, one of the most respectable of the popular party:—

'I know that long before the 5th of October there was a design to force the King to Paris—that M. Lafayette apprised the Ministers of this intention, and advised them to bring the regiment of Flanders to Versailles to prevent it. M. de Lusignan, colonel of this regiment, acquainted me soon after its arrival that every means of seduction—even money and women—were employed to debauch his soldiers. About four o'clock in the evening of the 5th the women arrived, led by two men [one of them Maillard, a hero of the Bastille, of whom we shall see more presently], and endeavoured to force their way into the Palace, but failing there, came into and filled the hall of the National Assembly. About midnight, M. de Lafayette arrived with the Parisian army. He told me,—*This is a fresh trick of the faction. Never before was so much money distributed to the people—the dearness of bread and the banquet given by the Gardes-du-Corps* [a customary dinner of welcome to the regiment of Flanders] *are mere pretexts.*'—*Procédure du Châtelet.*

M. Bergasse, the celebrated advocate and deputy to the National Assembly, also an advanced *liberal*, deposed—

'Several days before the 5th and 6th of October, it was publicly announced at Versailles, that there was to be an insurrection against the Royal Family;—that on the morning of the day on which the mob came, there was a great fermentation in Versailles itself;—that it was said that the time was come for cutting the Queen's throat, and getting rid of the Cabal of which she was the leader;—that for a long time previous to this, many persons seemed occupied with the project of making the Duke of Orleans regent of the kingdom;—that deponent does not permit himself, without further proof, to assert that this was with the consent of that Prince . . . but truth obliges him to declare that he had heard [early in July] the Comte de Mirabeau declare that no effectual step towards liberty would be made until they had made a *Revolution at Court*, and that the revolution must be the *elevation of the Duke of Orleans to the Regency*;—that one of those present asking whether the Duke of Orleans would consent, M. de Mirabeau answered that the Duke of Orleans had said everything that was satisfactory on that point.'

M. de Massé, captain-commandant of the regiment of Flanders, declared—

'That he was at the head of the regiment when the women arrived—that he and the other officers used every exertion to pre-

vent these women getting amongst the soldiers, but in vain—and that amongst these women there were several that from their voices, air, and manner, he supposed were *men in disguise.*'

He and other officers of the regiment deposed that money was distributed to debauch the soldiers from their duty, and adduced several instances.

Joseph Bernard, one of the Cent-Suisses of the Royal Guard, attested that—

'The iron gate of the Château [entrusted to the care of Lafayette's army] was opened at four o'clock in the morning of the 6th, though the custom is that it is never opened till the King rises; that it was by this gate that most of the populace entered—some entered by other gates—but *all directed themselves towards the Queen's apartments, and seemed to be led by some one acquainted with the interior of the palace.*'

M. Groux, one of the Gardes-du-corps, related—

'That between six and seven o'clock in the morning of the 6th he saw the Duke of Orleans in a grey frock-coat unbuttoned, so as to show his *star*, followed by a great mob crying, "*Vive le* Roi *d'Orléans!*" and that HE *pointed* out to *the people the great stairs of the Château*, and made a motion with his arm to indicate that they should *turn to the right.*'

—the *Queen's apartments* being on the *right* of the great stairs, whither, in pursuance of this indication, the mob directed itself, and massacred the Gardes-du-corps that attempted to defend her apartment.

Le Vicomte de la Châtre, deputy to the National Assembly, deposed—

'I had been up all night in the tumultuous sitting of the Assembly, where the women and mob of Paris had taken their places amongst us. At half-past three in the morning we adjourned, exhausted with fatigue. I attempted to get into the Château, but found it closed and guarded all round. I then went to my own lodging, and lay down on my bed. I had hardly got to sleep when I was roused by the Comte de la Châtre, who lodged in a room of the same house, which overlooked the front court of the Palace and the Place d'Armes, calling me to see that the mob had seized two of the Gardes-du-corps, and were beheading them under our windows. While at the window I heard loud cries of "*Vive le* Roi *d'Orléans!*" and looking out, I saw that prince coming along towards the spot where the Gardes-du-corps had been murdered. He passed close under the window—followed by a great crowd—with a large cockade

in his hat, and a switch in his hand which he flourished about, laughing heartily. Shortly after the appearance of the Duke of Orleans, the man with the great beard who had cut off the heads of the Gardes-du-corps—[the celebrated Jourdan-*Coupetête*]—passed our door with his hatchet on his shoulder, and with his bloody hands took a pinch of snuff from the porter, who was afraid to refuse him.'

It was also proved (and this M. Thiers could not venture to deny, because Mirabeau repeated it in the Assembly), that when Mirabeau quarrelled with the Duke of Orleans for his pusillanimity in running away from this inquiry, he exclaimed—'*The cowardly scoundrel does not deserve the trouble that we have taken for him.*' But M. Thiers, with his usual bad faith, conceals the equally proved fact that Mirabeau had said to Mounier, in reply to an expression he had used in some arguments about the Constitution in favour of a king, '*Eh, my God, good man that you are! who said that we were not to have a King? But what can it matter whether it be a Louis or a Philippe? Would you have that brat of a child* [the Dauphin]?'

It is in the face of these and hundreds of other concurring witnesses that M. Thiers has the effrontery to assert that this inquiry afforded '*no trace of any concerted plan*,' nor of any '*participation*' on the part of the Duke of Orleans, and that there was not any concert on this occasion between that prince and Mirabeau! Mignet, though carefully abstaining from mentioning the Duke of Orleans, falls into the same scheme of general misrepresentation; but he falls short of M. Thiers' bolder falsifications.

We have been thus minute in our exposure of M. Thiers' dealing with the character of the Duke of Orleans, for it is the pivot on which the whole of this very important portion of his History turns; and our readers will judge whether they ever before read, even in the lowest party pamphlet, a more contemptible affectation of candour—more shameless partiality—more gross inconsistency—more thorough want of principle, and a more audacious defiance of common sense and of *truth*.

We must make room for his further endeavours to attenuate these horrors and at the same time flatter old Lafayette, one of his patrons, whose conduct during this whole affair was *at best* contemptibly pusillanimous and blundering. The first movement on the morning of the 6th he thus describes;

'A quarrel (*un rixe*) took place with one of the Gardes-du-corps, who fired from the windows.'

This is an utter falsehood, invented, as far as our recollection serves us, by M. Thiers himself, to make the Gardes-du-corps appear the aggressors. There was no *rixe*—no shot was fired from the windows—no shot was fired by a Garde-du-corps anywhere. This our readers see is the old *suggestio falsi;* then follows the concomitant *suppressio veri.* The *Historian* does not relate the wanton butchery of several of these unfortunate gentlemen, who were only overpowered because they would *not* fire on the mob. On the contrary, he says in general terms that 'Lafayette saved the Gardes-du-corps from massacre,' and it is only by an allusion in a subsequent page, introduced to do Lafayette an honour he did not deserve, that we discover that any of the Gardes-du-corps had been murdered:—

'Lafayette gave orders to *disarm* [strange phrase!] the two ruffians who carried at the tops of their pikes the heads of the Gardes-du-corps. This horrible trophy was forced from them; and *it is not true* that it preceded the King's coach.'

This is a mixture of falsehood and equivocation. The ruffians were *not disarmed* of their horrid trophies; on the contrary, they carried them to Paris—not indeed *immediately* in front of the King's carriage, but in the van of the procession, which of course had begun to march before the King set out. This first detachment stopped half-way at Sèvres, where they forced the village hairdresser to dress the hair of the two bloody heads (*Bertrand de Moleville*, vol. i. p. 144). And finally, M. Thiers' impartiality suppresses one of the noblest and most striking traits of the Queen's character. When the officers of the Châtelet wished to obtain her evidence on these transactions; she replied that 'she would not appear as a witness against any of the King's subjects,' adding nobly, '*J'ai tout vu—tout su—et tout oublié!*'

All M. Thiers' other characters are treated in the same style: every Royalist is depreciated and libelled directly and indirectly, by misrepresentation, by sneer, by calumny; and not a crime or horror is mentioned without, sometimes, an insidious suggestion, but generally a downright assertion, that the King, the Court, or the Royalists were themselves the cause of it; while, on the other hand, every Revolutionist is a patriot, a sage, or a hero; and from the equivocating imbecility of Lafayette up to the bloody audacity

of Danton, every shade of worthlessness and crime finds in M. Thiers an admirer or an apologist.* Marat, we think, and, in some degree, Robespierre, are the only exceptions. Doomed as they already were to the part of *scapegoats* of all the sins of the early Revolution, M. Thiers finds it convenient to continue them in that character. As his narrative approaches later times, it is curious to observe with what evident, and sometimes gross personal flattery or personal injustice, he treats the objects of (as the case may be) his own political bias or antipathy. But it would take a Biographical Dictionary to follow him into all the details of his personal misrepresentations. We must content ourselves with having indicated his general practice, and pursue the more important duty of examining his narrative of events;—and in fulfilment of the principle which we professed at the outset, we will not make what might be thought a selection to suit our own purpose;—we shall accept the first marked *events* which the work presents—by them M. Thiers himself could not object to be judged.

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* There is another species of partiality which he constantly employs, and which, petty as it is, produces a certain general effect. The *young* historian, addressing himself to the passions of *La Jeune France*, exaggerates on every occasion the youth and beauty of his revolutionary heroes and heroines. For instance:—'About this time there was at Paris a young Marseillais, full of ardour, courage, and republican illusions, who was *surnamed Antinous* for his beauty—*qu'on nomma* ANTINOUS, *tant il était beau*' (vol. i. p. 303). A mere fiction: he never was so *named*. The assertion is a misrepresentation of a phrase of Madame Roland's; who, however, says no more than that a 'painter would not have disdained to have copied his *features* for a *head* of Antinous.' A natural remark from an *artist's* daughter, and who was herself supposed to have a *penchant* for Barbaroux; but it is far from the assertion that he was '*nommé* Antinous *tant il était beau!*'—for even Madame Roland does not so call him, and no one else that we can discover, except M. Thiers and his copyists, ever mentioned him and Antinous together. The truth is, that, whatever Barbaroux's *features* may have been, his figure was so clumsy, that, when the Girondins were endeavouring to escape after their insurrection in Normandy, his size was a serious embarrassment. 'Buzot,' says Louvet, one of the party, 'débarrassé de ses armes, était encore trop pesant. *Non moins lourd*, mais plus courageux, Barbaroux, à vingt-huit ans, était *gros et gras comme un homme de quarante*'—as bulky and as fat as a man of forty! What an Antinous! Of Madame Roland herself, M. Thiers says, '*Elle était jeune et belle.*' She was neither: her countenance, though very agreeable, and even engaging, had never, as she herself tells us, been what is called *belle*; and she was now *thirty-eight years old*. We even read at this same epoch that it was a matter of surprise that Dulaure should have '*quitté les charmes de la citoyenne Lejay* [the handsome wife of a bookseller] *pour s'attacher à ceux de la* vieille *Roland.*' (Mém. de Dulaure.—Rev. Ret. iii. 3, 11.) And she herself, with more good humour than is usual with her, owns that '*Camille Desmoulins a eu raison de s'étonner* qu'à son âge, et avec si peu de beauté, *elle avait ce qu'il appelle des adorateurs*' (*Appel à la Postérité*, iii. 61).

These are trifles in themselves, but they serve to illustrate the general system of deception—*retail* as well as *wholesale*—by which M. Thiers proceeds.

We begin with the first *bloodshed* of the Revolution, the *émeute* of the 27th of April, 1789, called '*l'affaire Reveillon*,' in which, without any visible cause or conjectured object, and while Paris, as well as the rest of France, was still in the tranquillity and legal order of the old *régime*—when nothing like an insurrectionary Revolution was thought of—a ferocious mob of persons, unknown in the neighbourhood and evidently hired and guided by some unseen agency, suddenly emerged from the Faubourg St. Antoine, dragging along the figure of a man labelled with the name of M. Reveillon, an extensive paper-manufacturer in the Faubourg St. Antoine, one of the most blameless and respectable citizens of Paris, esteemed by all his neighbours, and particularly popular with the working classes, of whom he employed a great number, and in the famine of the preceding year had been a large benefactor. After parading this figure through the streets, to the great terror of their inhabitants, as far as the *Palais Royal*, they there held a mock court upon it, and condemned *Reveillon* to be hanged in effigy, which, after dragging the figure through a number of other streets, was executed on the Place de Grève. We wish we had been told whether this mock execution was *à la lanterne*, and a precedent of the real murders so soon perpetrated there. This band of rioters passed the night in drinking and uproar in different public-houses, and next morning, reinforced by numbers of their own description, who seemed to have come in from the country, they again paraded the streets, increasing their force, and at last proceeded to attack Reveillon's residence and manufactory. The unresisted riot grew so obstinate and serious, that the troops were at length called out, but too late to prevent the total destruction of M. Reveillon's establishment, or that of M. Henriot, his neighbour and friend. The mob were so intoxicated with the plunder of the cellars of these houses, and so inflamed by their first successes and continued impunity, that they made a desperate resistance, and the riot was not eventually quelled but with a loss to the troops of nearly 100 killed and wounded, and between 490 and 500 of the mob. For this lamentable, and apparently unaccountable affair (which Mignet does not notice at all), M. Thiers assigns no motive and affords no explanation, except by repeating the notoriously false pretext of the mob—that Reveillon had proposed to reduce the wages of his workmen—for which there was not the slightest foundation, nor even colour; and we have evidence

of all kinds, and, if it were worth anything, M. Thiers' own, that the mob were not workmen, but altogether strangers to that neighbourhood. That M. Thiers was aware of the truth of the case, we are convinced by the art with which he contrives to evade it. He reverses the chronology of the facts, and relates the Reveillon riot *after* his account of the *Elections* of the Deputies of Paris to the States-General, though it happened *before* them. Of these he says that

'the elections were tumultuous in some provinces—active everywhere—and very *quiet in Paris*, where *great unanimity* prevailed. *Lists were distributed*, and people strove to promote concord and good understanding.'

Now, M. Thiers must have known that the facts were the very reverse of this. The elections of Paris were by no means that smooth and unanimous proceeding which he represents. The lists that he says were distributed were *adverse* lists —a strange form of unanimity. 'All parties,' he says, 'concurred;'—in fact, all parties differed, and so widely, that all the other elections of the kingdom were terminated, and the Assembly had actually met, above ten days before the Paris electors could agree on their members. Indeed, in the very next page he contradicts his statement as to the tranquillity and unanimity of the elections by admitting that the Duke of Orleans was *accused* of having been very active in procuring his own return and that of his friends. This is true, but not the whole truth. The moderate party, consisting of the most respectable citizens—of whom *Reveillon* was one—were anxious to prevent the election of the *Orleans* faction; and, with this view, they put forward a list of candidates, at the head of which stood the popular name of 'REVEILLON.' This is the key of the enigma. The Reveillon-list was to be got rid of—the electors were to be intimidated—and the Orleanist candidates returned! and so it was: and, then, to be sure 'the elections for Paris' became 'quiet' enough, and exhibited the same general unanimity and good understanding that the *massacres of September*, 1792, afterwards produced on the elections for the Convention! And who conducted this atrocious plot, which cost hundreds of lives at the moment, and hundreds of thousands in its consequences? M. Thiers' candour can go no further than to admit that

'the money found in the pockets of some of the rioters who were killed, and some expressions which dropped from others, led to the

conjecture that they had been urged on by a secret hand. The enemies of the popular party *accused* the Duke of Orleans of a wish to try the efficacy of the Revolutionary mob.'

And there the historian closes the subject—with a panegyric on the Prince, implying that the accusation was a mere party calumny, resting on those very slight circumstances. He does not choose to mention the exhibition of Reveillon's effigy the night before, nor the trial and sentence at the *Palais Royal*, nor to state that this riot took place on a day when the Duke of Orleans had collected the populace of Paris at a horse-race (then a great novelty) at Vincennes, on the high road to which stood Reveillon's house;—that he, the Duke, passed through the mob before the extreme violence had begun, and addressed to them some familiar and flattering phrases; and so passed through the crowd amidst shouts of '*Vive le Duc d' Orléans!*' Later in the day, when the troops had been called out, and were just about to act against the mob, the *Duchess* of Orleans drove in her coach into the street in which the parties were hostilely arrayed; and, while the troops endeavoured to persuade her to take another and less perilous route, her servants persisted in passing through, and the mob, affecting to make way for her carriage, broke with impunity the line of the troops, who of course could not offer violence to a lady—and that lady the Duchess of Orleans. This incident gave the mob additional confidence: they attacked the troops, and the result was as we have stated. This exhibition of the Duchess of Orleans in such critical circumstances has been adduced by other writers as a proof of the Duke's innocence of the riot—M. Thiers, more prudent, does not notice any of the circumstances, well aware that the rational inference is just the reverse. Who can doubt that the whole affair was concerted, and that the amiable and universally respected Duchess was thus brought forward by her profligate husband to encourage and protect his hired mob, just as in the subsequent attack of Versailles the first line of assailants were women, and men dressed in women's clothes, that the courage and fidelity of the troops might be embarrassed and neutralised by their reluctance to use violence towards anything in the semblance of a woman?

All this elaborate *suggestio falsi* and *suppressio veri* is clearly employed on the part of M. Thiers to forward the double object of his whole 'History'—to throw as much doubt as he could venture

to raise over the criminality of the Duke of Orleans, and to conceal —and where it could not be concealed, to excuse—the system of violence and terror which, from the first moment to the last, was the *primum mobile* of the Revolution.

Of the same kind, and for the same purpose, is one of, we suppose, the most audacious suppressions of an historical fact that any writer has ever ventured to make, which, from its resemblance to the fraud just exposed, we shall notice here, though out of its chronological order. In M. Thiers' long and laboured account of the *massacres of September* 1792, in his details of the state of parties and persons, and in his description of the aspect and feelings of the capital during those awful days—days of such mysterious and unaccountable slaughter as the world never before saw, and we trust never will again—M. Thiers does not notice nor even seem to know that they too just preceded and were accessary to the struggle of the *Elections for the Convention*. On the contrary, he attributes the massacres to the old hackneyed excuse of the terror occasioned by the advance of the Prussians, and endeavours, by what no doubt he thinks a philosophical reflection, to palliate those atrocities as the result of an accidental and not wholly irrational panic:—

'Sad lesson for nations! People believe in *dangers;* they persuade themselves that they ought to repel them; they repeat this; they work themselves up into a *frenzy*, and while some proclaim with *levity* that a blow must be struck, others strike with *sanguinary audacity*.'

What 'lesson' nations are to learn from this *galimatias* about 'terror,' 'frenzy,' 'levity,' and 'sanguinary audacity'—as if they were all the same thing, and all good excuses for massacre—we know not; and the whole phrase, like many other of those exclamatory apophthegms with which M. Thiers gems his pages, appears to us no better than detestable principles swaddled up in contemptible verbiage. He closes the chapter with the execrable or, as he calls, 'monumental' letter of the murderous *Commune* of Paris, inviting the rest of France to imitate the massacres—and concludes by observing:—

'From this document the reader may form some conception of the degree of *fanaticism* which the approach of *public danger* had excited in men's minds.'

As if that 'monumental' atrocity had even the paltry excuse of being the product of real fanaticism, or any sincere apprehension of public danger!

We must here pause a moment to observe that this is an instance of one of M. Thiers' most frequent tricks—he relates with an affectation of candour and some vague and dubious epithet (such as '*monumental*') an atrocity which he could not conceal, and then he subjoins some explanation or reflection calculated to attenuate the horror. This *Jesuitism* is one of the most prominent and remarkable features of the whole work.

Having thus adroitly disposed of the September massacres by the plea of fanaticism and fatality, he dedicates a long and very elaborate chapter to Dumouriez' celebrated campaign in the north; after which he reverts to Paris, and then first mentions, as a quite distinct subject, the *Elections* for the Convention, to tell us that they were severely contested throughout France between the Girondins and the Mountain, and that in Paris the latter were predominant; but he makes no other allusion to the terrible circumstances that really decided that predominance than these vague words, 'that in Paris the violent faction which had prevailed since the 10th August had rendered itself mistress of the elections' without the slightest retrospect to the *Massacres;* and by placing those events at such a distance from each other in his narrative, and by carefully omitting the *date* of the elections, he conceals their coincidence. That this suppression was not from either ignorance or accident, but mere *bad faith*, is evident from the vague expressions above quoted, but still more so from an admission made, inadvertently, we suspect, in a long subsequent passage, that the Girondins had reproached the Jacobins with 'having filled the Deputation of Paris by men only known for their participation in those horrible Saturnalia.'

The similarity of the cases has induced us to produce the latter out of its chronological order; and we now return to see how M. Thiers treats the *second great émeute* of the Revolution—which was still more important than the *affaire-Reveillon* as it produced immediately the attack and capture of the Bastille, whence may be dated the lawless portion of the Revolution. We mean the insurrection of the 12th July, of which the dismissal of M. Necker was not, as M. Thiers with all the Jacobin historians would have us believe, the cause, but the opportunity:—

'On Sunday, July 12, a report was spread that M. Necker had been dismissed, as well as the other ministers, and that the gentlemen mentioned as their successors were almost all known for their opposition to the popular cause. The alarm spread throughout Paris—the people hurried to the Palais Royal. A young man, since celebrated for his *republican* enthusiasm, *endowed with a tender heart*, but an impetuous spirit, Camille Desmoulins, mounted a table, held up a pair of pistols, and shouting *To arms!* plucked a leaf from a tree, of which he made a cockade, and exhorted the crowd to follow his example: the trees were instantly stripped. The people then repaired to a museum containing busts in wax. They seized those of Necker and the *Duke of Orleans*, who was threatened, it was said, with *exile*, and they spread themselves in the various quarters of Paris. This mob was passing through the Rue St. Honoré when it was met near the Place Vendôme by a detachment of the Royal-Allemand regiment, which *rushed upon it*, and wounded several persons, among whom was a soldier of the French guards. The latter, predisposed in favour of the people and against the Royal-Allemand, with whom they but a few days before had a quarrel, were in barracks *near the Place Louis XV.* They fired upon the Royal-Allemand. The Prince de Lambesc, who commanded this regiment, instantly fell back on the Garden of the Tuileries, charged the people who *were quietly walking there, killed an old man* amidst the confusion, and *cleared the garden*. Terror now becomes unbounded, and changes into fury.'

Now it is hardly possible to imagine a grosser series of misrepresentations than is contained in the passage we have quoted, compiled without discrimination or consistency from the herd of revolutionary libellers. Who would not think that all this movement on the part of the people was a sudden impulse excited by the dismissal of M. Necker, and confined to the parading two busts? But it is notorious that these commotions had actually commenced several days earlier, and it was proved before the Châtelet that the dismissal of M. Necker only accelerated by two days the insurrection which was already in preparation.

And why the bust of the Duke of Orleans? Why was *he* coupled with M. Necker on this occasion? Because '*it was said* he was threatened with *exile*.' A ridiculous pretence!—the truth is, the mob was *his*, and the exhibition of his bust was the signal of the intended change of dynasty. But we are further told that this procession, peaceably carrying the busts from the Palais Royal along the Rue St. Honoré towards the Place Louis XV.,

was *rushed upon* by the regiment of Royal-Allemand. M. Thiers must have known that this procession was not the accidental and unarmed movement that he chooses to describe it: we have abundant evidence that it was a preconcerted insurrection, organized and launched from that *officina motuum*, the Faubourg St. Antoine. Beffroy de Rigny, for instance, a patriotic writer of considerable note in his day, and an enthusiastic admirer if not an associate of the insurrectionary proceedings, gives us this account (published at the moment) of what he himself saw of the affair:—

'I heard that there was some commotion. I directed my steps to the *Boulevard du Temple* [on the opposite side of the town from the Place Louis XV.]; there I saw about *five or six thousand* men marching rather quick and in no very regular order—but all armed—some with guns, some with sabres, some with pikes, some with forks, carrying wax busts of the Duke of Orleans and M. Necker, which they had *borrowed* from M. Curtius [a sculptor, who had an exhibition of wax figures on the *Boulevard du Temple*]. This *little army*, as it passed along the Boulevard, ordered all the theatres to be closed that evening, on pain of being burned. This armed troop received reinforcements at every street that it passed [towards the Place Louis XV.]'—*Histoire de France pendant Trois Mois de* 1789.

It was not, therefore, the Royal-Allemand that wantonly charged an *unarmed* crowd, which in a sudden effervescence had seized and paraded two busts—it was an army of five or six thousand armed men (increasing in numbers as they proceeded), which had premeditatedly *borrowed* the two busts (which were some days after returned to the owner), and marched from the Faubourg St. Antoine to brave, if not to attack, the troops posted, for the protection of the public peace, in the neighbourhood of the Place Louis XV., a distance of at least three miles—that is, as if a London mob were to march from Whitechapel to St. James's.

M. Thiers in his first edition described the young man '*with the tender heart*,' Camille Desmoulins, who made the motion in the Palais Royal, as known for his 'exaltation *démagogique*'—which in his second edition he softens into 'exaltation *républicaine*,' and he omits to state that he was the bloodthirsty ruffian who, two days later, assumed the title of *Procureur-Général de la Lanterne*, and was subsequently the *âme damnée* of Danton—both, as Desmoulins himself boasted, belonging to that *Orleanist* party which

MM. Mignet and Thiers affect to believe never existed.* But we pass over these and several other gross mistakes and grosser misrepresentations in M. Thiers' account, to direct particular attention to the alleged 'attack on the people quietly walking in the Tuileries Gardens by the Prince de Lambesc.' This utter falsehood was the main incentive of the more extended insurrection which ensued, and in fact overturned the ancient monarchy of France: and an historian of common honesty ought to have made himself master of the facts of so important a case—which indeed happen to be better and more authentically established than almost any other event of the Revolution. As this matter is of considerable importance, not only to history, but, specially, as a test of M. Thiers' veracity, we recall the particular attention of our readers to his assertion:—

'The Prince of Lambesc, at the head of his regiment, *falls back* (*se replie*) on the Garden of the Tuileries—*charges* the people who were quietly walking there—*kills an old man* in the midst of the confusion, and *clears* the Garden.'

In the whole of this statement there is not one word of truth—and there can be no doubt or question about the facts, for the matter was the subject of a long, full, and anxious judicial proceeding—in the *procès* instituted by the rebellious Commune of Paris against the Prince de Lambesc—the report of which was officially published at the time, and is now before us. We here find from the original evidence of a host of witnesses, that the regiment of Royal-Allemand being drawn up, with several other bodies of troops, in the Place Louis XV., was pressed upon by an armed mob, which had marched from the most distant part of the town with the avowed purpose of a conflict, and whose pressure and violence rendered the position of the troops very perilous. The Prince was therefore ordered by Baron de Bezenval, who commanded the whole, to clear away the mob that was closing round them—not, as M. Thiers says, by *falling back* on the Garden, but by *coming forward*—not by *charging*, but by *slowly advancing*, and obliging the crowd to retire from the *Place* over the *Pont-tournant* or drawbridge

* Here we have to notice another of M. Thiers' variances. He had stated in his first edition that this faction of Desmoulins and Danton 'was said to have been subjected (*soumis*) to the Duke of Orleans;' but that would seem to attribute to the Duke of Orleans the command of the Dantonist party, and therefore the *historian*, in his revised copy, changes *soumis* into *unis*.

into the Garden—(*see the prefixed plan*)—following them no farther than to occupy the interior entrance to prevent the return of the rioters. So far was the Prince from attempting to clear the Garden, or charging the peaceable promenaders, that the detachment made no attempt whatsoever to advance beyond the entrance, which is confined between two terraces; but the mob in front and on the terraces high on both sides, soon became so numerous and violent as to force him, by an attack of stones, broken bottles, billets of wood, and even some shots, to retreat back again *from* the Garden into the Place. When the people saw the troops about to execute this retreat, they made a rush at the drawbridge to endeavour to turn it, and so have the small detachment at their mercy. The Prince, seeing this attempt, spurred his horse to the bridge, and just as he reached it, a man who had been endeavouring to turn it laid hold of his bridle and tried to unhorse him. The Prince thus assailed struck the man with his sabre, and, cutting through his hat, wounded him in the head, and thus intimidating the mob secured the retreat of the troops. The man, after being wounded, walked to one of the garden-seats, whence the mob took him, and, laying him out *for dead* on a kind of bier, paraded him through the streets to the *Palais Royal* (again '*the Palais Royal!*') as a victim wantonly *murdered* by the Prince de Lambesc. This was the man whom M. Thiers states to have been *killed*—but lo! on the trial of the Prince de Lambesc, one of the first witnesses examined was the *murdered man* himself—a schoolmaster, Jean Louis Chauvel by name—who, though he denied having seized the Prince's bridle, or taken any part in the riot, admitted that he was at the edge of the bridge as the Prince was endeavouring to pass; and he related, with a naïveté and candour which, after M. Thiers' tragic version, is almost amusing, that

'after receiving the blow through his hat, he went and sat down on one of the garden-seats, whence he was removed by a troop of persons who gathered round him, and carried him to the *Palais Royal* and afterwards home, when he sent for his surgeon to dress the wound, and was in about a fortnight quite well again.'—*Procès du Pr. de Lambesc*, p. 19.

As this trial did not take place for six months after the event, we could excuse a writer who had in the interval adopted the exaggerated rumour of the day; but that M. Thiers should have repeated it in 1823, and in all his subsequent editions, is indis-

putable evidence of either the most unpardonable negligence or the most reprehensible bad faith, and in either case would—even if it stood alone, instead of being surrounded by crowds of similar cases—irretrievably destroy the character of the historian and the credit of his History.

But we must proceed with the narrative of events. Monday the 13th and the morning of the 14th were employed by the same insurgents in seizing arms from the gunsmiths, the barracks of the troops and the Invalides, and in the afternoon of Tuesday the Bastille was taken!

'The share,' says M. Thiers, 'that *secret means* had in producing the insurrection of the 14th of July is unknown, and will probably remain so for ever—but 'tis little matter—[*peu importe*]. *L'aristocratie* was conspiring—the popular party might well conspire *in its turn*—the means employed were the same on both sides. The question is, on which side was justice?'

We really fear that the repetition of such outrageous instances of bad faith will become as nauseous to our readers as we have found them in perusing the pages of M. Thiers—but as they form in fact the staple of his whole work, we are obliged, with whatever contempt and disgust, to reproduce them.

Our readers will observe that the assertion that 'the *secret means* employed to bring about the insurrection of the 14th of July are, and will always be unknown,' is made to save M. Thiers the trouble of finding further excuses for the Duke of Orleans' notorious share in these continuous riots;—and for this purpose, as well as for that of bringing a new accusation against the Royalist party, he makes the following extraordinary statement:—

'It appears that a grand plan had been devised for the night between the 14th and 15th:—that Paris was to be attacked on seven points—the Palais Royal surrounded—the Assembly dissolved, and the Declaration of the 23rd of June submitted to the Parliament of Paris—and finally that the wants of the Exchequer should be supplied by a bankruptcy and paper money [*billets d'état*]. So much is *certain*—that the Commandants of the troops had received orders to advance from the 14th to the 15th—that the paper money had been prepared—that the barracks of the Swiss Guards were full of *ammunition* [*munitions*—military stores in general]—and that the Governor of the Bastille had disfurnished the fortress [*déménagé*], with the exception of some indispensable articles of furniture.'

On this heterogeneous mass of notorious falsehood and arrant nonsense, which we copy from *Shoberl's* translation, we must first observe, that the statement, as above quoted, is a fraudulent variation from M. Thiers' own first edition. In that edition the attack of Paris—the dissolution of the Assembly, &c.—had been stated only as '*on a dit*'—*it has been said*—which was, as we shall see, true enough; but M. Thiers in his subsequent editions expunged the *on a dit* and left the naked assertion, which was utterly false. But that is a trifle. The essential fact is, not only that no such things had any existence—but, what more immediately concerns M. Thiers' credit and character, that there is not the smallest colour or pretence for any part of the statement—that every detail of it has been fully and judicially disproved—that in its present shape and combination it is altogether a wilful falsehood. While the events were still fresh in memory and hot in popular feeling, there was a regular legal inquiry into all the circumstances, by the trial—before the lately re-organized tribunal of the *Châtelet*, for the new crime of *Lèse-Nation*,* or High Treason against the People—of MM. de Barentin and Puysegur, ministers at the time, of the Marshal de Broglie, commander-in-chief, and of the Baron de Bezenval, the General of the Swiss Guards (already mentioned), who then, as he had for the eight preceding years, commanded all the troops in and around Paris, and who was peculiarly obnoxious to the Revolutionists for the confidence which the King, and particularly—as it was said *ad invidiam—the Queen* placed in him. The charges drawn up by a committee of the rebellious Commune of Paris comprised most of the absurd allegations which M. Thiers has revived—absurd, says Bezenval himself, 'to the degree of a pitiable *insanity*,—projects of the siege of Paris—massacre—red-hot shot, and so forth.'—(*Mém. de Bez.* ii. p. 380.) But there was not even a shadow of proof; and this officer, who had three times, with great difficulty, escaped being hanged *à la lanterne*, was, with all his co-accused, even in those days, acquitted from the *insane* charges which M. Thiers has again raked up in this calumnious romance which he calls a History.

The reproduction of these charges after, and *without any men-*

* 'Ce mot dont s'enrichissait la langue révolutionnaire indiqua un délit qu'on se garda bien de définir afin d'en rendre l'application plus commode.'—*Mém. de Bezenval.*

tion of, this judicial and contemporaneous disproof, is a fair test of the historian's veracity; but it is also a specimen either of his own want of thought and judgment, or, which is more probable, his utter contempt for the understanding of his readers. There are other points, however, of this strange statement that deserve particular notice.

'The barracks of the Swiss were full of *munitions*.' Undoubtedly the Swiss Guards *ought* to have been supplied with the necessary stores and provisions, whether they were to be moved or not; and indeed any unusual accumulation of 'munitions' in the *barracks* would prove that they rather apprehended than intended an attack; but in truth there is the clearest evidence, and amongst others that of M. de Bezenval himself, that not only were no provident measures of any kind taken, but that, on the contrary, the most obvious precautions had been inconceivably neglected—and this M. Thiers himself blindly intimates in the last and most wonderful member of this wonderful paragraph:—'The Governor of the Bastille had *unfurnished the fortress*, with the exception of some indispensable articles.' One translation says '*disfurnished*;' the other, '*removed all his furniture*;' the original, '*le Gouverneur de la Bastille avait déménagé*,' which, in the ordinary use of the words, would mean *removed both himself and furniture*. We know not whether M. Thiers, whose acquaintance with Paris dates only from 1821, and who, as it appears from other passages, was in 1823 by no means *au fait* of the ancient topography of the city, was aware that the Governor's *residence* made no part of the fortress, but was an exterior and separate building; it seems not, as he applies the term '*déménagé*' to '*la place*'—the fortress. But in whatever sense he meant to use the ambiguous term, the result to which he comes is this—that the royal fortress of the Bastille was disfurnished, *because* it was about to become the headquarters of the royal army, with which it was to co-operate. Now, if the Governor had *furnished* the place, it might have been said that he anticipated some movements; but to *déménager*, whatever may be M. Thiers' meaning of that term, at the moment, and with the view of making the place a *point d'attaque* on Paris, would be the grossest absurdity. But we must add a far more important fact, which M. Thiers does not mention—the fortress had been, in fact, left most strangely and suspiciously unprovided of men, ammunition, and even provisions. Out of this supposed

army, which M. Thiers represents as surrounding Paris in such force as to be sufficient to attack the city on seven separate points, 'and which,' he says, 'struck horror into the minds of men'—the Bastille was left with a garrison of 82 *Invalides, and 32 of the Swiss Guards*, who had been sent there on the 7th—five days before M. Necker's dismissal—and after that day, in spite of the growing agitation in the city, not one man was added; and to complete the incredible apathy and negligence of the Government, they had no 'munitions' for either attack or defence, and *not one day's provisions;* and in this state of things M. Thiers does not blush to assert, and to repeat, that the Government had meditated a general attack on Paris on the very day when the Bastille was found without a second day's bread for the 114 Invalides and Swiss who formed the garrison. And there is still another circumstance, which, minute as it is, may not be thought insignificant: when the Governor was made prisoner, he was not armed nor even in uniform, but in a grey frock, and with a cane in his hand. It would be an infinitely more reasonable inference from all the known and certain facts, that treachery in some high quarter must have occasioned so strange a neglect of the most obvious and most necessary precautions on the part of the Government.

M. Thiers' details of the actual capture of the Bastille—though of comparatively less importance—still deserve notice as further instances of inaccuracy and misrepresentation.

'No succours arriving, the Governor *seized a match with the intention of blowing up the fortress*, but the garrison opposed it and obliged him to surrender.'

This is a repetition of a silly rumour of the day. The Governor was one of the first, if not the very first, to think of surrendering, and exhibited no romantic point of honour as to defending—much less *blowing up the fortress.* One story says that he was about to do so with his own hands, when stopped by two invalides. Another, and less improbable one, is, that not the Governor—but one of the inferior officers—wrote and threw across the ditch a note to say, 'We are willing to surrender provided we are assured that the garrison shall not be massacred; but if you do not accept our capitulation we shall blow up the fortress and *the neighbourhood.*' This menace, if employed at all (which is by no means certain), was but a weak attempt to save their lives by

alarming the assailants for their own; for as to really blowing up the Bastille rather than surrender, how could it have come into any one's head? What worse could the mob do than destroy the royal fortress and kill the garrison?

'The besiegers approached, promising not to do any mischief; the Invalides, attacked by the populace, *were only saved from their fury* by the zealous interference of the French-Guards. *The Swiss found means to escape.*'

Who would not imagine from this statement that the Invalides and Swiss were all saved, as the capitulation guaranteed?—now hear the fact:—

'Most of the Invalides remaining in the courts of the fortress were put to death in the most merciless manner; two of the survivors were hanged at the Hôtel de Ville *à la lanterne*—the *Gardes Françaises* [who had joined the mob] saved others who were fortunate enough to have escaped from their assassins.'—*Bert. de Moleville*, i. 24.

As to the Swiss, their own officer relates—

'We experienced every sort of outrage. We were threatened with massacre in all possible shapes—at length I and *some* of my men were taken to the Hôtel de Ville. On the way I was assailed with all kinds of weapons, and saved only by the zeal of one of the *Gardes Françaises*, who protected me. Two of my men were massacred close behind me.'—*Rev. Ret.*

The rest—the '*débris*,' the *broken remains*, as he emphatically terms the few who had accompanied him, escaped by a concurrence of fortunate accidents which deceived the ferocity of the mob: but what became of the others he does not seem to have known; and the total number of either Swiss or Invalides massacred in the Bastille, or afterwards in the streets, was never, we believe, ascertained. M. Thiers, in a subsequent passage, dispatches the whole of this butchery in *three* words—'other victims *fell*'—but who these victims were—whether of the garrison or the besiegers—or whether they *fell* in the conflict or by subsequent massacre, or what was the number of victims, M. Thiers does not afford us a hint. And yet there was a circumstance in these latter massacres which M. Thiers' silence will not obliterate from the history of France. In them was first employed that new instrument of death, '*la lanterne*;' but, wonderful to say, that watchword of murder,

which had so large a share in the early Revolution—from which one of M. Thiers' pet patriots, Camille Desmoulins, '*né avec un cœur tendre*,' took his infamous title—which has been adopted into modern editions of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*—('LANTERNE—LANTERNER—*sorte de supplice que le peuple au commencement de la Révolution faisaient subir*,' &c.)—this remarkable word, we say, and the atrocity it describes, M. Thiers suppresses; and as one closes M. Mignet's 'History' without learning that there was such an implement as the *Guillotine*, so we must read M. Thiers' narrative of the 14th July without the light of the *Lanterne*.

We cannot refrain from adding two minute circumstances with which M. Thiers concludes his account of the capture of the Bastille. In describing the triumphal procession of its conquerors, he states—

'The keys of the Bastille were carried at the end of a bayonet. A bloody hand, raised above the crowd, exhibited a *stock-buckle*—it was that of the Governor, de Launay'—

His *stock-buckle?*—it was his HEAD!—This, the first of those frightful exhibitions that became so rapidly the standards and trophies of Parisian valour, was surely not undeserving the notice of the impartial historian, even if it did not excite his indignation and horror. M. Thiers indeed adds that M. de Launay was '*beheaded;*' yet even that dry and tardy statement is a miserable equivocation—he was *not* 'beheaded'—he was (as we shall see presently) *massacred*, after a long and miserable agony, and it was after death that his *head* was *hacked off*, placed on a pike, and paraded through all Paris—though M. Thiers' historic eye rested only on his *stock-buckle!*

Immediately after these horrors another victim was added—M. de Flesselles, the Prévôt des Marchands—chief magistrate of Paris. For this murder M. Thiers has also several palliatives, with which we will not disgust our readers. We will notice only one, common to both the cases:—

'*On prétend* that a letter had been found on de Launay from Flesselles, in which he said, "Hold out while I amuse the Parisians with cockades."'

M. Thiers says *prétend*,—it *is* asserted,—but M. Thiers knows very well that no one now believes—nor, indeed, ever did—such a noto-

rious absurdity, or rather indeed impossibility: he knows that, *fifty years ago*, M. Bertrand de Moleville—a gentleman of the highest station and character, on whose 'Annals of the Revolution' M. Thiers frequently relies, though, with his usual inconsistency, he as frequently garbles and depreciates the authority to which he is so largely indebted—M. Bertrand de Moleville, we say, condescended to expose this absurd calumny; and had, we should have supposed, extinguished it for ever.

The real character of all this series of events—their causes and concatenation—which M. Thiers so elaborately obscures, will be explained, we think, to the surprise and horror of our readers, by a document which any French historian—and, above all, those of the Revolutionary school—might be reluctant to quote, and English writers may probably not have known, but which was judicially published in Paris in January, 1790, and which we possess in a supplement to the *Journal de Paris* of the 26th of that month.

We have just alluded to the trials before the Châtelet, in which the Prince de Lambesc and M. de Bezenval were acquitted. As those trials were drawing to a close, an attempt was made to intimidate the judges, or, if that should fail, to massacre the prisoners, by collecting round the Châtelet the same sanguinary mobs that had committed all the former enormities. At this moment, however, Lafayette and his friends being in power, he, with the National Guard, protected the tribunal; some of the mob were arrested; and of one of them we have before us the following extraordinary examination and confession:—

'CHÂTELET DE PARIS.

'16*th January*, 1790.

'*Interrogatory of Francis Felix Desnot*,* *now a prisoner in the Châtelet, aged thirty-three years, by profession a cook, out of place, and residing in the Rue St. Denis.*

'*Asked*—How long he has been out of place, and how he has lived?

* Desnot was well dressed, and seemed very much surprised that so useful a patriot should be arrested. There is no doubt that he was one of those habitually *employed* in these atrocities. On the 29th of June, 1792, complaint was made in the National Assembly that the Jacobin Club had given a certificate of civism to a thrice-convicted *galérien*: the fellow's name was differently caught by different reporters. Prudhomme gave it as *Desnos*. We have no means of tracing whether Prudhomme was correct, nor whether *Desnos* was the same as *Desnot*, but the Jacobins in the Assembly seemed to take a warm interest in the fellow's case.

'*Answers*—That he has been six months out of place; and that he has lived with his wife, who embroiders, and is very well able to support him.*

'*Asked*—What he did on [Sunday] the 12th of July last, and the subsequent days?

'*Answers*—That on the 12th of July last, in the afternoon, as soon as he saw the procession of the busts of M. Necker and M. d'Orléans, he joined the party that were carrying them, and crying "*Vive M. Necker!*" "*Vive M. d'Orléans!*"—that he proceeded thus as far as the Palais Royal; that there four persons proposed that they should go to the Place Louis XV. to prevent the troops from massacring the people, whom they were pursuing; that he, deponent, went with all the rest; that the troops—amongst whom was, as he heard said, the Prince de Lambesc—dispersed and sabred them; that he, deponent, was overset, and was struck by several stones, and heard *one* gunshot; that to avoid the stones that were flying about, he lay down flat on a heap of building-stones on the Place; that on rising he picked up a dragoon's helmet, which he kept, and carried away; that in returning he cried out, as he went along, "Citizens! be on your guard to-night!"—that he then went home, and did not go out again that day.

'That on the next morning, Monday [the 13th]—hearing that the *citizens* had taken arms—he joined them about nine o'clock on the Place de Grève with his helmet on his head. That he, deponent, went with the people to get the arms from the Popincourt barracks; that he, having already a gun, marched *at the head* and prevented the people stopping by the way to take the wine of two shops; that when they reached the barracks they armed themselves with guns, and he, deponent, took care that those only who were steady and able to use arms should have any; that, thus armed, the crowd went different ways; that he, deponent, with one body came to the Hôtel de Ville; that these were told "to go home; that they were about to organise *districts* in order to take prudent measures;" that he, deponent, went home, and thence to his district (St. Opportune), and with other citizens formed patroles that day and *others*—so that in fact he, deponent, was *eight days and nights* continually on foot *to maintain good order*. (!)

'That the morning of Tuesday [the 14th] was employed in going to seize the arms at the Invalides; that, being informed in the afternoon that there was a movement towards the Bastille, he went also to get, like the rest, a gun [he himself having been the day before a distributor of guns] and some powder and ball,

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* The reader sees that this circumstance is thrown in to conceal the fact that he was living on the *wages* of his terrible *employment*.

according to a message from the Governor of that fortress to the rector (curé) of St. Paul's. Soon after he had entered the Bastille he heard that the people were conducting M. de Launay to the Hôtel de Ville. That he, deponent, hastened after him and overtook him near the Arcade of St. John [one of the entrances to the Place de Grève], and never quitted him till they came to the barrier in front of the Hôtel de Ville:—that then the people cried out, "*Hang him, hang him!*" That M. de Launay, seeing that the people were attacking without hearing him, called out—opening his eyes and grinding his teeth—"*Put me to death at once;*" that at that moment several persons unknown to this deponent fell on M. de Launay with bayonets, guns, pistols, and other weapons; that he, deponent, who was standing near M. de Launay, received a violent kick, which forced him to fall back a little; but afterwards the people, seeing his helmet, said, "Come, dragoon, he struck you—*cut off his head;*" that although M. de Launay had been dead a quarter of an hour, and in spite of his own repugnance, he began with a sabre that they gave him to endeavour to separate the head from the body; but finding the sabre too blunt, he took out his pocket-knife * and *finished the operation.* That the head, being thus separated, was placed on the end of a pike; and that he, deponent, still pressed and solicited by the people, carried that head about the streets until the close of day; that the person who carried the head of M. de Flesselles having joined him, they both came and deposited the heads at the lower jail, for which they gave him a crown; that he had promised the people to carry about the head next day, but on getting home he reflected seriously on this event. That he so little thought that he was compromising himself in this affair, that he prepared several addresses [claiming some additional and honorary reward]; that he even presented them to the deputies who came next day to Paris; to some of whom he even said that he had rid society of a monster, and hoped he might receive a medal as a reward for having gone to take the arms from the barracks and the Invalides, and particularly from the prison of La Force, where the jailer consented to deliver them, he, deponent, having politely invited him so to do. He adds, that about an hour before he cut off M. de Launay's head he had taken a small glass of brandy, into which he had poured some gunpowder, which had turned his head. He knows that several persons came to his residence next morning to get from him the receipt for the two heads which he had received from the turnkey at the jail, and that, not

* On the production of the knife it was observed to him that it was rather small for such an operation. He replied that he was a cook, and had been bred a butcher, and therefore knew how to dissect.—*Moniteur*, 15th January, 1790.

having found him at home, they forged a receipt, by means of which he has heard that they obtained the heads, giving the receipt to the jailers.'

We must here pause a moment in this astonishing narrative to remind our readers that a week after the capture of the Bastille, Messrs. Foulon and Berthier—the first, one of the ministry named to succeed that which was dissolved by the dismissal of M. Necker, and the latter his son-in-law—were massacred in the Place de Grève on the most absurd pretexts and in the most cruel manner, and their heads, and the *heart* of M. Berthier, were paraded through the town. M. Thiers on this occasion says that M. Foulon was hanged 'à un réverbère'—*a reflector*—an inoffensive synonyme which he employs to avoid using the true and technical description of *à la lanterne*—he even admits that M. Foulon's head was promenaded through Paris—but he does not condescend to mention the *head* and *heart* of M. Berthier; and he sums up this new tragedy by observing, that

'these murders must have been planned (*conduits*) either by the personal enemies of M. Foulon or by those of the public welfare; for though the fury of the people had been spontaneous at the sight of the victims, as most popular movements are, their original arrest must have been the result of concert.'

Here again M. Thiers misrepresents, and endeavours to separate this case from the other events; the fury of the people was not spontaneous—and the concert and combination, which he admits to have existed, were no other than the same concert and combination which had been at work for the preceding ten days—for here again we find Desnot acting the same part that he had done on the 12th, 13th, and 14th, and as he boasted that he did '*for eight days after*,'—and it was on the *eighth* day that these gentlemen were massacred. Thus proceeds this wretch's deposition:—

'This deponent further declares, that on the day that M. Berthier was brought to the Hôtel de Ville, he, deponent, was on the Place de Grève, but he participated in no way in that assassination—but he was so close to that terrible execution, that he heard the said Berthier say to the people, "Spare me, my friends, I am innocent; I will give you a million," or several millions; that the said Berthier was not hanged at the gallows of *la lanterne*, but massacred by the

sabres of the soldiers; that amongst others a soldier of the regiment of *Royale Cravatte* cut open his belly with his sabre; that the crowd was so great that he, deponent, fell upon the body—that an individual to him unknown tore out the heart of M. Berthier, and placed it in his, deponent's, hand—and that the soldier took him by the collar and said, "Come, dragoon, carry this heart to the Hôtel de Ville"—that he did so carry it, and *obtained an audience of M. de Lafayette*,* and on leaving M. de Lafayette and coming down the stairs of the Hôtel de Ville, the same soldier stuck the heart on the end of his sabre, and forced him, deponent, to carry it about—that they went through several streets of Paris, and to the Palais Royal, and that at last, while he and the soldier were getting their supper in a public-house in one of the streets that lead into the Rue St. Honoré, the people came and demanded the *heart* from them, and that deponent threw it out of the window to them, and does not know what became of the heart afterwards; and deponent further says, that he has nothing more to reproach himself with, in all the unlucky events that have since happened:—that he accompanied, indeed, M. Lafayette *to Versailles on the 5th of October last*, but took no part in the murder of the Royal Guards, but only possessed himself of a *shoe* belonging to one of those that were killed, to show it in Paris.

'*Asked* if he was not excited to cut off M. de Launay's head, to carry M. Berthier's heart at the point of a sabre, and to attend all the mobs that have collected, and if he has not received sums of money for doing so?

'*Answers*, that he has not been excited by any one in particular, but by the people in general, as he before stated; that he has received nothing for these actions—that he has ten or a dozen times played the bassoon in certain processions of women to St. Geneviève, and that he received three or four livres for each turn.'—*Supplément au Journal de Paris*, 26 *Jan.* 1790.

Such is the real picture of the Revolution!—the portrait *ad vivum*—not as outlined by Mignet or coloured by Thiers, but the living image—which to get rid of and obliterate, and to throw a veil over its authors and clouds of suspicion over its victims, is the first object of these pretended Histories. We need enter into

* Ill as we think of most parts of Lafayette's conduct, we do not infer from this statement that he gave any countenance to this hideous visitor. But is it not strange that the wretch was not arrested at the Hôtel de Ville, the seat of both the military command and the chief magistracy? and stranger still that the bloody trophy was not taken from him? and strangest of all that such a fact, solemnly stated in a court of justice and published at the time, should never have been again noticed—at least that we know of?

no detailed observations on Desnot's deposition, a strange and frightful mixture of confession and concealment—but which—as is always the case when the criminal is allowed to talk—involuntarily reveals what it attempts to hide. Can any one believe that it was '*fatality*,' or '*accident*,' or '*spontaneous* excitement,' as M. Thiers indulgently phrases it, that occasioned this cook out of place, with no means of livelihood but his wife's needle, to be an active leader in *all* these successive scenes—in the insurrection of the 12th of July—in the plunder of arms on the 13th—in the attack of the Bastille on the 14th—in the *patroles* that filled Paris with terror for the ensuing week—in the murderous riot of the 22nd—in the attack on Versailles on the 5th of October—and in the mob of murderers that besieged the Châtelet in January 1790:—who was the trophy-bearer of all these popular victories—who for ten days was distinguished in the streets of the capital by the plundered helmet, at once the trophy and the proof of the popular aggression—who sawed off and paraded M. de Launay's head on the 14th—who tore out and paraded the heart of M. Berthier on the 22nd—who on the same evening, after a visit to M. Lafayette, went to sup with his brother murderer, having on their table the heart of their victim, which, on the requisitions of the mob outside, they threw out of the window—and who finally brought back from Versailles on the 6th of October the *shoe* of one of the murdered Gardes-du-corps, which he treats—just as M. Thiers does M. de Launay's *stock-buckle*—as if the *heads* of the victims were a minor incident not worth notice? Can it be doubted that this was a chain of preconcerted *émeutes;* and can M. Thiers hope to persuade any man of common sense that '*l'or répandu*' in preparing such scenes and in hiring such actors was 'without any influence on the Revolution?'

This wonderful case of Desnot, though the most circumstantial that we have happened to find, is by no means a solitary proof that all these enormities were prepared by the same heads and executed by the same hands. We could produce many other indications that it was an organised system. One case is so flagrant that even M. Thiers cannot suppress, though, as usual, he endeavours to excuse it. He is forced to admit that a fellow of the name of *Maillard* (*antè*, p. 45), formerly a tipstaff or bailiff in one of the courts of law, played a great part on *all* these occasions—that he was at the head of an *organised* band of assassins—that he was the

most prominent leader of the attack on the Bastille—that it was the same Maillard who led the mob of women * to Versailles on the 5th of October—and again the same Maillard—still more decidedly damned to everlasting horror for having presided over and directed the *Massacre at the Abbaye.* Here again we have the same man appearing and re-appearing in all these various scenes of blood. M. Thiers cannot pretend that these repeated, or we may rather say constant, coincidences could have been 'accident' and 'spontaneous excitement.' Who then were the employers and paymasters of Desnot and Maillard—who but the two main objects of M. Thiers' special protection and apology, *Danton* and *Egalité?*

Here, for the present, we conclude. We have got through little more than the first livraison of M. Thiers' first work, and have already exceeded our usual limits; but this portion affords the most decisive and irrefragable tests of the historian's credit. We have not *selected* our instances; we have, as we before said, taken what M. Thiers presented to us as his first and greatest objects; we have exhibited his mode of dealing with the two *first* and most important *personages* of each party—the King and Queen, and the Duke of Orleans and Lafayette; the two most remarkable *elections*—those of 1789 and 1792; the two *first émeutes*—of the 27th of April and 12th of July; the two *first* massacres—of the 14th and 22nd of July; the eventful and decisive days of the 5th and 6th of October, and of the 2nd and 3rd of September;—all, in short, that was most striking, most important, and most influential in the early Revolution; all that required, in the highest degree, diligent research, careful investigation, and an impartial spirit; and in all these great cases we have proved against him what we cannot—on the soberest reconsideration—call by any gentler name than a deliberate system of fraud and falsehood.

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* One of M. Thiers' strange shifts and misrepresentations is his adopting Maillard—whom Senart, himself an active Jacobin, calls '*le Généralissime des Brigands*'—as a well-meaning man, who led this '*singular army*' to Versailles against his will, to prevent their doing more mischief elsewhere—though where or how they could do more the historian does not tell.

ESSAY II.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, JANUARY 1823—MARCH 1851.*]

LOUIS XVI. AND MARIE ANTOINETTE.

1. *Memoirs of the Private Life of Marie Antoinette, Queen of France and Navarre: to which are added, Recollections, Sketches, and Anecdotes, illustrative of the Reigns of Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Louis XVI.* By Madame Campan, First Femme-de-Chambre to the Queen. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1823.
2. *Foreign Reminiscences by Henry Richard Lord Holland.* Edited by his Son, Henry Edward Lord Holland. Pp. 362. London, 1850.

WE slightly alluded in the last Essay to the work of Madame Campan, as affording an authentic contradiction of some of the misrepresentations by which the character and conduct of MARIE ANTOINETTE were so long and so unjustly assailed by the Revolutionary press. We now pursue the same subject in a fuller

* This Essay originally appeared in two separate articles: the first, on 'Madame Campan's Memoirs,' in January 1823, took a general view of the characters of the King and Queen and of the aspect of the Court. An Article in the preceding number on O'Meara's 'Napoleon in Exile' had dealt shortly, but it was thought conclusively, with some gross personal slander against the Queen, for which Buonaparte had cited the authority of Madame Campan, and which the unexpected appearance of Madame Campan's own Memoirs triumphantly disproved. After a lapse, however, of near thirty years, the same calumnies, and on the same pretended authority, were reproduced in Lord Holland's 'Foreign Reminiscences,' which rendered it necessary to repeat the refutation with more precision and detail, and with some inquiry as to the motive which could have induced Lord Holland to revive and endeavour to accredit that disgusting fable. This inquiry was, in a great measure, a re-examination of that portion of Madame Campan's Memoirs, and it seems therefore proper to bring them together under one head.

The original Article on Lord Holland followed him through an excursive and defamatory description of almost all the Courts in Europe, but I extract for republication only those parts that have reference to the early period of the French Revolution, to which this volume is expressly dedicated; and I reprint no more of my opinion of Lord Holland than is necessary to a fair appreciation of his historical credit.—[1855.]

account of these important, as well as interesting, Memoirs. Interesting every one will allow them to be; but their importance will be best appreciated by those who recollect the infernal arts and assiduity with which the partizans of the Revolution in all its stages libelled the Queen of France. It was the *system* of the designing, and the *fashion* amongst the thoughtless, to attribute to her such levity, prodigality, and folly as might (in the opinion of the authors of the slander) justify the horrible extremities to which the royal family and the ancient institutions of France were *pre-condemned*. No doubt the Queen's character has been long since re-established—the last heroic years of her life—her magnanimity, her prudence and her talents—her attachment to her husband's person—her generous devotion to his interests—her maternal virtues—her affectionate constancy to her family and her friends—her courage in all the horrors of her long and complicated misfortunes, and, when courage could do no more, the dignified resignation and modest piety of her last moments—all have placed Marie Antoinette among the highest examples of conjugal faith, maternal duty, and Christian heroism. But the libels against her early life still exist—repelled indeed by the character she subsequently displayed—refuted by the inference drawn from her latter conduct, but not till now so *directly* and authoritatively contradicted as might be wished, but, from the peculiar nature of the case, was scarcely to be hoped. Many historians of the Revolution, who do ample justice to the conduct of Marie Antoinette since 1789, have nevertheless been seduced into the belief that there was something in her earlier life which justified the public hatred; and we have seen that, even in our own day, Buonaparte thought he might venture to renew accusations which, we know, were assiduously circulated during the obscure commencement of his career. The greater part of these calumnies—all indeed that could be reached by public discussion—have been repelled by the memoirs of persons who were well acquainted with the several circumstances, such as M. de Choiseul, the Baron de Bezenval, the Abbé Georgel, the Marquis de Ferrières, M. Weber, M. Bertrand de Moleville, &c. Some of these writers were politically hostile to the queen, and some imagined that they had personal causes of resentment against her, and their works are more or less tinged with the pre-

judices which would naturally accompany such feelings; but the force of truth is too powerful for such prejudices; and accordingly we may safely assert that the perusal and collation of the works to which we allude have, in the minds of those who have taken the trouble to follow the inquiry, completely and unanswerably cleared the character of the Queen from *all* those calumnies which, from her accession to the throne to the moment she ascended the scaffold, were propagated against her, by intriguers whose malignity was aided by the gratuitous scandal in which a profligate and gossiping capital is always ready to indulge.

It is curious and touching to find the Queen fully alive to this painful peculiarity of her position. She was well aware of this system of calumny; she deplored it as a public mischief, and felt it as a personal danger, but never thought that it could leave any stain on her character. When apprehensions were entertained of a design to poison her, she countermanded some precautions that she found had been taken against it, saying to Madame Campan, 'Tis useless; no poison will ever be employed against me. This is not an age for the Brinvilliers [a celebrated *empoisonneuse* of the time of Louis XIV.]. They now-a-days have *calumny*, which is a surer and safer mode—and it is by *it* that I shall be put to death.' But she did not anticipate that calumny would pursue her even after death.

We repeat therefore that the work now before us, though certainly not necessary, was yet desirable, to complete the evidence. So many of the accusations were directed against the interior and strictly private circumstances of the Queen's life, that, *except herself or her femme-de-chambre*, none could, of their own knowledge, deny them. The Queen's denial would probably not have had much weight with her malignant accusers, nor even with the world at large, credulous of slander and very slow to be corrected; but

> ——— 'quod optanti Divûm promittere nemo
> Auderet, volvenda dies en attulit'———

beyond all hope this work adduces the evidence of the *femme-de-chambre*—and such evidence!

Had Madame Campan been an ordinary waiting-woman, she would not have been admitted to—nor, if admitted, could she have understood and described—those circumstances of intimate society

on which her evidence is so important; but she fortunately was a lady by birth, and exceedingly well educated: these qualities obtained her the Queen's favour and confidence; she was besides, as we now find, an accurate observer, and a very agreeable writer. Thus then she had all the opportunities of informing herself, and the capacity of informing us.

But it will be asked, was she a person of veracity?—or, if of veracity, might she not be blinded by *prejudices* from seeing, or restrained by *interest* from telling, the whole truth on so delicate a subject? Here again the confirmatory evidence is full and satisfactory. Madame Campan's prejudices were all in favour of the Revolution; her private friends and society were inclined to that party. Some of her family, and particularly her brother, the once famous Citizen Genet; threw themselves *à corps perdu* into republicanism, and these and other circumstances (which we shall presently mention) gave Madame Campan herself the reputation of being a partizan of the Revolution—nay, of having betrayed the Queen! The charge of treachery was undoubtedly false; but, it is certain that she was inclined to *liberal* opinions; that, therefore, her judgment was not likely to be warped by courtly prejudices, and that her defence of the Queen was not the mere effect of a blind adulation.

The other doubt which might be raised against her testimony is liable to an equally convincing answer. She could have no object of personal interest in varying from truth in her narrative. The time at which the Memoirs may have been composed does not clearly appear; but it seems probable that they were begun about the period of Buonaparte's assuming the imperial crown. Madame Campan had been intrusted with the education of his step-daughter, and this produced intimacy with Josephine and acquaintance with her husband. In the course of the Memoirs, and still more in the notes and the Appendix, a variety of facts relative to the *etiquette* of the old French court are very carefully collected and systematically arranged. There is little doubt that these memoranda were written by Madame Campan (whose former situation had made her an authority in these matters) at the desire of Buonaparte, as the guide and model of the etiquette of the Court which he was about to revive. It is, therefore, very likely that the being set upon this task obliged Madame Campan to revive her recollections of Versailles, and that these

Memoirs are the indirect result of Buonaparte's inquiries into the manners of the old Court. When we recollect the slander against both the Queen and Madame Campan that he subsequently dictated to O'Meara, we may be convinced that it could not be for the hope of Buonaparte's favour that she would extenuate any faults which could have been attributed to Marie Antoinette. Thus then on every point the credit and veracity of these Memoirs appear to be confirmed, by a concurrence of circumstances very unexpected, and yet perfectly natural and convincing. To which we must add, that we find throughout the work an air of sincerity and an accuracy as to dates and persons (very unusual in modern French literature) which must establish, in the judgment of every attentive reader, the authenticity and truth of Madame Campan's narrative.

The circumstances, however, of Madame Campan's connexions with the revolutionary party (although now so eminently useful in establishing her credit and the character of the Queen) subjected her to the jealousy, the suspicion, and even the hatred of the royalists, who judged her too hastily by the politics of her family in 1792, and by her own subsequent connexions with Buonaparte. Madame Campan tells us that at the period of the flight to Varennes the Queen was betrayed by a '*femme subalterne*' who belonged to her household. We find in the works of the day insinuations, and in a later work a direct charge, that this treacherous *femme subalterne* was no other than *Madame Campan herself*, and that to this crime she owed her ultimate favour with the Jacobin emperor. If, as is very probable, Buonaparte was in the habit of repeating to others the same lie he told to O'Meara, or even a less offensive version, which, as we shall see presently, he dictated to Las Cases, it is not surprising that (not merely the zealous royalists, but) every man of honour, and woman of delicacy, should abhor the baseness attributed to her; and accordingly, when her Memoirs were announced for publication, they were expected with considerable anxiety by all the well-disposed, and with something like hope and anticipated triumph by the Jacobin faction, which still, 'like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.'

The work appeared, and disappointed everybody. The bed-chamber-woman shows no tinge of court prejudices; the sister of Citizen Genet seems to have been a faithful royalist; the

supposed tool of Buonaparte is the defender of the Bourbons; and the pretended betrayer and calumniator of Marie Antoinette will be, to the latest posterity, a faithful friend and powerful defender.

We must not, however, conceal from our readers that Madame Campan's character has been assailed by imputations of another kind; which, though not *directly* affecting the truth of her Memoirs, would undoubtedly tend to diminish the credit which we give, and the respect we are inclined to feel for her. Madame Campan, as we before stated, after the reign of terror, applied her talents to the education of young ladies; and her rank, her character, and her former connexions with the court, soon placed her at the head of the most extensive and respectable seminary in France. In this situation Madame Campan became a very remarkable and not unimportant personage in society. Our readers will recollect that before the Revolution all female education was conducted in convents—they fell even sooner than the throne, and education fell with them. During the anarchy no two subjects were so often in men's mouths as *humanity and education*. The erection of a thousand scaffolds testified the love of the former, and the destruction of every kind of discipline proved the anxiety for the latter. Madame Campan's establishment, then, had not only the attraction of utility, but of novelty also; and it was moreover regarded as the commencement of a restoration of morals and education in France.

'"A month after the fall of Robespierre," she says, "I considered of the means of providing for myself, for a mother seventy years of age, my sick husband, my child nine years old, and part of my ruined family. I now possessed nothing in the world but an assignat of five hundred francs (20*l.*). I had become responsible for my husband's debts, to the amount of thirty thousand francs. I chose St. Germain to set up a boarding school; that town did not remind me, as Versailles did, both of the happy times and the first misfortunes of France, while it was at some distance from Paris, where our dreadful disasters had occurred, and where people resided with whom I did not wish to be acquainted. I took with me a nun of *l'Enfant-Jésus*, to give an unquestionable pledge of my religious principles. I had not the means of printing my prospectus. I wrote a hundred copies of it, and sent them to those persons of my acquaintance who had survived our dreadful commotions.

'"At the year's end I had sixty pupils; soon afterwards a

hundred.* I bought furniture, and paid my debts. I rejoiced in having met with this resource so remote from all intrigue.

'"A literary man, a friend of Madame de Beauharnais, mentioned my establishment to her. She brought me her daughter Hortense de Beauharnais, and her niece Emilie de Beauharnais. Six months afterwards she came to *inform me of her marriage with a Corsican gentleman, who had been brought up in the Military School, and was then a general.* I was requested to communicate this information to her daughter, who long lamented her mother's change of name.

'"I was also desired to watch over the education of little Eugène de Beauharnais, who was placed at St. Germain, in the same school with my son.

'"My nieces, Mesdemoiselles Auguié, were with me, and slept in the same room as the Mesdemoiselles Beauharnais. A great intimacy took place between these young people. Madame de Beauharnais set out for Italy, and left her children with me. On her return, after the triumphs of Buonaparte, that general was much pleased with the improvement of his step-daughter: he invited me to dine at Malmaison, and attended two representations of Esther, at my school."'—p. xxviii.

When Buonaparte, in imitation of Louis XIV., resolved to revive the establishment of St. Cyr, at Ecouen, he selected Madame Campan to be the head of his new institution. One of her nieces (Mademoiselle Auguié) married Marshal Ney; another (Madame de Broc) was lady of honour to the Queen of Holland, and, in short, she and her family were at the height at once of court favour and of popular consideration.

So much good fortune, says one of her biographers, naturally excited envy. Unpleasant reports were circulated as to the morals of the school at St. Germain's; Buonaparte's omnipotence, however, silenced all complaints against those whom he protected. But on the overthrow of her supposed patron these rumours were revived. A person of the name of Revel, whose wife, educated at St. Germain's, had, to use his own phrase, 'passée des bras de Murat dans ceux de Buonaparte,' accused

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* 'The brilliant and rapid success of the establishment at St. Germain was undoubtedly owing to the talents, experience, and excellent principles of Madame Campan. Nevertheless, it must be allowed that she was wonderfully seconded by public opinion. To court, cherish, and show attention to any person who had been at court, was to defy and humble the reigning power; and every one knows that people never denied themselves that pleasure in France.'—(*French Editor.*)

Madame Campan of having contributed to the irregularities of her pupil. To the outcry which Revel's accusation produced were now superadded the charge of treachery to the Queen; and the violent deaths of her nephew Marshal Ney, of her niece Madame de Broc,* and some other near relations, happening about the same time, reduced Madame Campan to a state of great depression and misery. She had resolved on publishing a defence of herself; but this idea she abandoned, probably because she found that justice was done to her by other hands. Amongst them was the celebrated Count de Lally-Tolendal and the Duchesse de Tourzel, whose evidence in favour of her fidelity to Marie Antoinette removed every doubt on that subject; while the baseness and falsehoods which, in the course of the legal investigation of Revel's case, were proved upon that calumniator, and the testimony of, perhaps, a thousand of the most respectable women in France whom she had educated, cleared Madame Campan from the other imputation. The consolation which this general recognition of her innocence must have given Madame Campan was but short-lived. In addition to the family misfortunes we have already mentioned, she was now overwhelmed by the loss of her only son. 'This violent crisis,' as the editor informs us, 'disturbed her whole organization,' a painful illness was the result, and, in spite of the fortitude with which she sought a chance of relief in a painful operation, she died on the 16th March, 1822.

To these calumnies against Madame Campan's private life we have reluctantly alluded; but attaching, as we do, a high historical importance to her work, we thought that we might be taxed with unfairness if we suppressed circumstances which might so seriously affect the character of the writer. We are glad to be able to conclude by declaring our conviction that the charges of treachery to the Queen arose from mistake and misunderstanding; while those connected with the conduct of the seminary were suggested by malignity, and supported only by falsehood.

If our object were the mere amusement of our readers, we could

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* In a visit made by the Reine Hortense and her suite on the 16th June, 1813, to the romantic cascade of Grésy, near Aix en Savoie, Madame de Broc, approaching too near the edge of the precipice, slipped over and was lost in the gulf below. A monument marks the scene of this event, which was still fresh in the memory and regrets of the neighbourhood when I visited the spot twenty years later.—[1855.]

fill our pages with anecdotal extracts; we think that we shall do better by dedicating the space we can spare for this work to a few of the historical topics which it presents.

The first and most important of these is the intimate view which Madame Campan gives of the temper, disposition, and talents of the KING and QUEEN.

It is a theorem, and of no very easy solution, how far the personal characters of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette contributed to the events of the Revolution. Would greater firmness and decision have arrested it? Could a more dexterous and judicious policy have guided it into a smoother current? We are strongly inclined to answer in the affirmative—at least up to the 6th October; but it seems as if Heaven, for purposes inscrutable to human reason, had endowed the King and Queen with the very characters, nay, with the very virtues, which were most certain to contribute to the overthrow and ruin of themselves, their family, and their kingdom.

The KING was brought to the block for perfidy and tyranny. Had he possessed the qualities which such charges were meant to impute, he would probably have saved both his life and his crown; but he happened to carry even to a (politically speaking) blameable excess the contrary virtues. He was, in theory, obstinately attached to what he thought right, but could neither explain himself nor influence others; and the honest but awkward rectitude of his mind was uncongenial with that system of *compromise* by which all the affairs of the world, private and public, must be conducted. And while thus fixed in his own opinions, and thus wanting the moral power of propagating them, he was still more deficient in the firmness of purpose and decision of action which were necessary to give them practical effect. A great aversion to violence; strong religious scruples; a real love for his people; and, in addition to all these, an over-value of popularity, with which he had been early imbued, rendered him incapable of exercising the necessary force of authority. His truth and justice limited his disposition to reward, and his tenderness and timidity rendered him reluctant to punish. In short, if he had not possessed, in extraordinary combination, the arts of 'cooling his friends and heating his enemies,' he could not have been on the 6th October led into captivity, nor driven, on the 10th of August, to beg a degrading asylum in the reporter's box of the National Convention.

On the other hand, the chief political accusations against the Queen were her offensive German pride and partialities; her despotic influence over her husband; and her intrigues with the enemies of the Revolution. Alas! the reverse of all this led her to the dungeon and the scaffold. The simplicity of her tastes and manners had broken down the old *etiquettes* which *fenced* the throne; and, although the greater vivacity of her character seemed to throw her husband into the shade, yet it appears that she never was able to inspire him with the spirit and firmness which the difficulty of their circumstances required. Louis was in truth not so easily managed as is generally thought. His heart was excellent, but his temper was at once obstinate and hasty, though in public, and with his ministers, he repressed it with admirable self-command. Dumouriez says, that 'the only occasion on which he ever saw that *pure and gentle soul at all ruffled* was, when he was pressed to sanction the iniquitous decree against the non-juring clergy;' and there is no doubt that such was his general disposition; but in his interior he was by no means so tractable. He seems to have had some jealousy of the Queen's superiority, and often acted without, and even against, her advice, particularly in the earlier days of the Revolution, before he had painfully learned to appreciate his own deficiencies and her devotion and intelligence; but it is not so generally known that he sometimes treated her with harshness. It was stated by a hostile witness on the Queen's trial that the King had, on one occasion, confined her to her apartment for a fortnight—a fact, that she admitted, though she did not state what her offence had been. It seems to have happened at Versailles.—*Bull. du Trib. Rév.* iii. 104.

The Queen, very early, delineated to Madame Campan with great force and justice the King's character and her own position.

'The Queen was also very uneasy as to what would take place at Paris, and spoke to me upon the King's want of energy, but always in terms expressive of her veneration of his virtues, and her attachment to his person. The King," said she, "is not a coward; he possesses abundance of passive courage, but he is overwhelmed by an awkward shyness, a mistrust of himself, which proceeds from his education as much as from his disposition. He is afraid to command, and, above all things, dreads speaking to assembled numbers. He lived like a child, and always ill at ease, under the eyes of Louis XV. until the age of twenty-one. This

constraint confirmed his timidity. Circumstanced as we are, a few well-delivered words, addressed to the Parisians who are devoted to him, would multiply the strength of our party a hundred fold; he will not utter them. What can we expect from those addresses to the people which he has been advised to post up? Nothing but fresh outrages. As for *myself*, I could do anything, and would appear on horseback, if necessary. But if I were really to begin to act, that would be furnishing arms to the King's enemies; the cry against the *Austrian*, and against the sway of a *woman*, would become general in France; and, moreover, by showing myself, I should render the King a mere nothing. A Queen, who is not Regent, ought, under these circumstances, to remain passive, and *prepare to die!*'

M. Bertrand de Molleville, the most trustworthy authority on this as on every subject he treats of, tells us that—

'the most remarkable features of the King's character and intellect were his natural timidity or shyness, and an obstinate difficulty of expressing himself on ordinary occasions; but this hesitation,' he adds, 'disappeared on any subject connected with religion or the happiness of the people, when he would speak with a readiness and energy that used to surprise particularly his new ministers, who generally came into his closet with a prejudice that his intellect was of a very low rate.'

This strange reserve showed itself on small occasions and in his interior, quite as much as in public. Madame Campan relates:—

'The two Gardes-du-corps who were wounded at Her Majesty's door on the 6th of October were M. du Repaire and M. de Miomandre; on the dreadful night of the 6th of October the latter took the post of the former, when his wounds rendered him incapable of maintaining it.

'M. de Miomandre was at Paris, living on terms of friendship with another of the guards, M. Bertrand, who, on the same day, had received a gun-shot wound from the brigands in another part of the chateau. These two officers, who were attended and cured together at the infirmary of Versailles, were almost constant companions; they were, one day, recognised at the Palais Royal, and insulted.* The Queen thought it advisable they should leave Paris. She desired me to write to M. de Miomandre, and tell him to come to me at eight o'clock in the evening; and then to communicate to

* This was probably the affair so misrepresented by M. Thiers or M. Lafayette, *antè*, p. 35. The necessity of sending them away proves the sincerity and prudence of the King's rejection of Lafayette's insidious, or at best most injudicious, advice to recall the Gardes-du-corps.

him her wish to hear of his being in safety; and she ordered me, when he had made up his mind to go, to open her *cassette*, and tell him in her name, that gold could not repay such a service as he had rendered; that she hoped some day to be in sufficiently happy circumstances to recompense him as she ought; but that, for the present, her offer of money was only that of a sister to a brother, and that she requested he would take whatever might be necessary to discharge his debts at Paris and defray the expenses of his journey. She told me also to desire he would bring his friend Bertrand with him, and to make him the same offer as I was to make to M. de Miomandre.

'These two gentlemen came at the appointed hour, and accepted, I think, each one or two hundred louis. A moment afterwards the Queen opened my door; she was accompanied by the King and Madame Elizabeth; the King stood with his back against the fireplace; the Queen sat down upon a sofa and Madame Elizabeth sat near her; I placed myself behind the Queen, and the two Gardes stood facing the King. The Queen told them that the King wished to see, before they went away, two of the brave men who had afforded him such proofs of courage and attachment. Miomandre spoke and said all that the Queen's affecting and flattering observations were calculated to inspire. Madame Elizabeth spoke of the King's sensibility; the Queen resumed the subject of their speedy departure, urging the necessity of it; but the *King was silent;* his emotion indeed was evident, and his eyes were suffused with the tears of sensibility. The Queen rose, the King went out, and Madame Elizabeth followed him; the Queen stopped and said to me, in the recess of a window, "I am sorry I brought the King here! I am sure Elizabeth thinks with me: if the King had but given utterance to a fourth part of what he thinks of those brave men, they would have been in ecstacies; but he cannot overcome his diffidence."'

This seems incomprehensible; but the fact cannot be doubted, and it affords an obvious clue to the first cause of the otherwise unaccountable fall of the most ancient monarchy of Europe, under the honestest man that ever sat on its throne.

The following instance is less surprising, but equally significant:—

'At four o'clock [on the morning of the 10th August] the Queen came out of the King's chamber and told us she had no longer any hope; that M. Mandat, who had gone to the Hôtel de Ville to receive further orders, had just been assassinated; and that the people were at that time carrying his head about the streets. Day came; the King, the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, Madame, and the Dauphin, went down to pass through the ranks of the sections of the national

guard: the cry of *Vive le Roi!* was heard from a few places. I was at a window on the garden side; I saw some of the gunners quit their posts, go up to the King, and thrust their fists in his face, insulting him by the most brutal language. Messieurs de Salvert and M. de Briges drove them off in a spirited manner. The King was as pale as a corpse. The royal family came in again; the Queen told me that all was lost; that the King *had shown no energy;* and that this sort of review had done *more harm than good.*'

It sealed his doom. '*He showed no energy,*'—that is, he noticed no one, spoke to nobody, and exhibited to his disheartened friends and insulting enemies no better appearance than an unwieldy puppet led about by his servants. The bad effect of this exhibition must have been greatly increased by a circumstance that except at such a crisis would be too trifling for notice. The King had not undressed that night, though he had thrown himself for a few minutes on his bed; and he made this unhappy review in the costume of the preceding evening—a court suit of violet silk, a dress sword, a *chapeau bras*, and his hair full dressed on one side, but disordered on the other by his having lain down upon it.*

In the course of the night the King communicated to one of the officers in command the intended measures of defence, which seemed to him so inadequate, that he hastened to advise Madame Campan to put whatever jewels or money she might have in her pockets ready for an escape, for that 'all resistance would be ineffectual without some energy on the King's part—and that is the *only virtue which he has not.*'

But all this moral weakness was, as the Queen said, not incompatible with a large share of passive courage. If he showed no feeling, he appears to have felt no fear; and in several instances, as in the terrible crisis of the 20th June, his personal fortitude rose almost to dignity. And what could exceed the propriety and the feeling of the whole subsequent period of his life? Where is there to be found, either for expression or sentiment, a more beautiful and elevated composition than his Will—of the authenticity and sole penmanship of which the jealous cruelty of his jailers has precluded all doubt? We are really at a loss to

* Let it be remembered, however, that in Feb. 1848 Louis Philippe made a similar review, in the costume and with the air and spirit which a similar occasion seemed to require, but that he was abandoned just as shamefully as poor Louis XVI. had been.—[1855.]

reconcile such moral contradictions; and in our perplexity have been sometimes inclined to suspect that the ill-timed silence, and apparent apathy, which afflicted the king's friends, may have been, in some degree, an awkward effort at showing tranquillity and firmness: and that his morbid diffidence took refuge in a phlegmatic deportment, which he perhaps thought might pass for dignity. But even this solution would by no means satisfy all the difficulties.

The QUEEN was at first idolised by the nation. Madame Campan suspects that there was an *Anti-Austrian* faction which, from the beginning, endeavoured by slanders and libels to render her odious. We cannot acquiesce in this designation—a faction there undoubtedly was, but love or hatred of Austria had nothing to do with it; it began with the Duke d'Aiguillon and Madame Dubarry, enraged at the noble scorn with which the Princess treated that infamous faction. To them succeeded the Duke of Orleans, whose profligacy, while it made him odious to the King and Queen, rendered him also little scrupulous as to the modes by which he could repay their hatred. The youth and gaiety of the Queen, who was only fifteen years of age at her marriage, and the extraordinary but now *well-attested indifference of the King towards her person*, which lasted till the end of the seventh year of their union, while it may have excited a hope in the Duke of Orleans of being eventually the direct heir to the crown, may have also afforded a motive and a kind of probability for the slanders which were circulated, while the disuse of the *Etiquettes* of the Court seemed to afford the opportunity of irregularities, which, under the old court *régime*, could not have occurred.

The importance which Madame Campan attaches to the abolition of these etiquettes may appear to savour of the *femme-de-chambre;* but we are much deceived if the philosopher and politician, who look closely at the subject, will not be of her opinion. Sovereign power has a natural tendency to abuse; the private life of individuals is under a control (not always efficacious even in that class) which does not exist for princes: over the manners of the latter, courtly etiquettes and the formalities of official attendants are almost the only restraints, and they have at least this good effect, that, while they operate as a real check on the demeanour of princes, they also afford the public a kind of guarantee not merely for the personal safety, but, in some degree,

for the decorous conduct, of their sovereigns. The vulgar, who do not see, and the heedless who do not examine these etiquettes, think lightly of them. In France they had become a subject of popular reproach and ridicule. Marie Antoinette was delighted to throw them aside; and Louis, whose personal habits were extremely simple, and whose mind had received some impression from the *philosophes*, was not very strenuous in support of these 'idle forms and antiquated prejudices.' On this subject Madame Campan makes the following interesting observations:—

'Speaking here of etiquette, I do not allude to that order of state, laid down for days of ceremony in all courts. I mean those minute ceremonies that were observed towards our kings in their inmost privacies, in their hours of pleasure, in those of pain, and even during the most revolting of human infirmities.

'Under this sort of etiquette our princes were in private treated as idols, but in public they were martyrs to decorum. Marie Antoinette found at Versailles a multitude of customs established and revered which appeared to her insupportable.

'One of the customs most disagreeable to the Queen was that of dining every day in public. Marie Leckzinska had constantly submitted to this wearisome practice: Marie Antoinette followed it as long as she was dauphiness. The Dauphin dined with her, and each branch of the family had its public dinner daily. The ushers suffered all decently dressed people to enter; the sight was the delight of persons from the country.

'Very ancient usage too, required that the Queens of France should appear in public, surrounded only by women; even at meal times, no persons of the other sex attended to serve at table; and although the King ate publicly with the Queen, yet he himself was served by women with everything which was presented to him directly at table. The Queen, upon her accession to the throne, abolished this usage altogether; she also freed herself from the necessity of being followed, in the palace of Versailles, by two of her women in court dresses, during those hours of the day when the ladies in waiting were not with her. From that time she was accompanied only by a single valet-de-chambre and two footmen. All the errors of Marie Antoinette were of the same description with those which I have just detailed. A disposition gradually to substitute the simple manners of private life for those of Versailles, was more injurious to her than she could possibly have imagined.

'The Queen frequently spoke to the Abbé de Vermond * of the perpetually recurring ceremonies from which she had to disengage

* He had been the Queen's preceptor.

herself; and I observed that always, after having listened to what he had to say on the subject, she very complacently indulged in philosophical reveries on "simplicity under the diadem," and "paternal confidence in devoted subjects." This pleasing romance of royalty, which it is not given to all sovereigns to realize, flattered the tender heart and youthful fancy of Marie Antoinette in an extraordinary degree.

'Brought up in the court of Vienna where simplicity was combined with majesty; placed at Versailles between an importunate *dame d'honneur* [*Madame de Noailles*] and an imprudent adviser [*l'Abbé Vermond*], it is not surprising that when she became Queen she should be desirous of evading these disagreeable ceremonies, the indispensable necessity of which she could not see: this error sprung from a true feeling of sensibility.'

The continued and successive abolition of the forms with which a Queen of France was surrounded, afforded the Orleanist faction a colourable pretext for those monstrous calumnies which were propagated against the Queen. Not one of them—neither the imaginary midnight walks—the fabulous orgies of Trianon—the imputed levities of Madame de Polignac's society—the exaggerated prodigality of her toilette—nor, above all, the atrocious details of the famous, the infamous affair of the necklace—could have been *imagined*, if the old etiquettes of the court had not been disused: and it would not be difficult to derive the insulting nickname of *Madame Veto*, given by the Jacobins to the Queen, from that of *Madame L'Etiquette*, given by her, with too much levity, to the Countess de Noailles, her first lady of the bedchamber.

This principle of lowering the regal dignity to the simplicity of private life, however amiable in its motives, was, and ever will be, when practically applied, injurious to Majesty. Our readers will recollect that most of the detestable libels which for so many years inundated the press against our late most excellent and virtuous sovereign, George III., were founded on a few circumstances in which his majesty had condescended to put away some portion of the reserve and dignity of the royal station. A certain degree of constraint on his own feelings and wishes is the price at which every public functionary must purchase public respect; and kings, being the highest in the scale, must buy it the dearest. This both Louis and Marie-Antoinette discovered when too late.

It was at last the disregard, by the National Assembly, of a point of etiquette, which seems to have most fully opened the eyes of the

King to the degradation into which he had fallen and to the danger with which he was menaced.

The King had voluntarily offered to accept the Constitution in the very hall of the Assembly. He knew the King of England so met his Parliament, and expected to do so with equal dignity. But a preliminary debate on the manner of receiving him ended in the resolution that the Members should be seated, while the King should stand—the King, however, sat down, and, not rising when the President rose to answer him, the latter sat down also and addressed him sitting. Madame Campan must describe how these insults affected the King. The date was the 14th Sept., 1791.

'The Queen attended the sitting in a private box. I remarked on her return her total silence and the deep grief which was depicted in her countenance.

'The King came to her apartment the private way: he was pale; his features were much changed; the Queen uttered an exclamation of surprise at his appearance. I thought he was ill; but what was my affliction when I heard the unfortunate monarch say, as he threw himself into a chair, and put his handkerchief to his eyes, "All is lost! Ah! Madam, and you are witness to this humiliation! What! You are come into France to see ——." These words were interrupted by sobs; the Queen threw herself upon her knees before him, and pressed him in her arms. I remained with them, not from any blameable curiosity, but from a stupefaction which rendered me incapable of determining what I ought to do. The Queen said to me, *Oh! go, go!* with an accent which expressed, "Do not remain to see the dejection and despair of your sovereign!"'

It may at first sight be wondered at that the King should feel so deeply an insult which appears trivial compared with those he had often suffered—on the 6th of October—in the defeated journey to St. Cloud—and in the return from Varennes; but it must be observed that those indignities were apparently the acts of a misguided populace; but in this affair the King could not mistake the solemn and calculated determination of the National Assembly—from that hour he saw that he was no longer King, and the very ceremony of his *Constitutional* inauguration gave him a clear prospect of his approaching deposition. It was some time after this, and evidently from something of a similar feeling, that the King fell, as Madame Campan relates, into a fit of extreme dejection both moral and physical.

'For ten whole days he never articulated one word, even in the

bosom of his family. The Queen was at last driven to rouse him from this morbid apathy by making a scene. She threw herself at his feet, and urged upon him alternately topics of alarm and expressions of affection. She appealed to his sense of duty to his family and to his character, and went so far as to say that, if they were doomed to perish, it were better to do so with honour than wait to be strangled —both he and she—on the floor of their apartment.'

Madame Campan does not give us the precise date of this occurrence, nor of the immediate cause of the King's despondency; but it is evident that the period was the close of May and beginning of June, 1792, and the subject, two decrees, recently passed by the Assembly, one for the formation of a revolutionary army of 20,000 men near Paris, and the other, which the King was still more averse to, for banishing the nonjuring clergy. These decrees, which his Girondin Cabinet were pressing him, by menaces of personal violence and even massacre, to sanction, he could not reconcile with his own safety or authority as to the army, nor, above all, with his conscience as to the clergy. Hence these ten days of apparent apathy, but real suffering; and Dumouriez has told us how deeply he felt it. His painful deliberation ended in his dismissing that ministry, and putting his *veto* on the decrees. This was announced on the 19th of June, and on the 20th the mob broke into the palace, and were only prevented, by some fortunate accidents, from realizing the Queen's apprehensions of 'being strangled on the floor of their apartment.'

In this case, as in several other instances, it is evident that the apparent apathy was not the result of insensibility, but, on the contrary, of the acute and conscientious feelings of an honest man, doubtful of his own judgment, and still more so of his power to carry it into effect.

These, which we may almost call personal defects, would in ordinary times have but little obscured the rectitude of his intentions and the innate goodness of his heart; but, in the cruel circumstances into which he was thrown, his very virtues, we repeat, became accessory to his ruin; and it may be truly said of him, as Bishop Burnet says of one of his characters, 'his piety made him too apt to mistrust his own sense, and to be too tender, or rather fearful, in anything where there might be a needless effusion of blood.' On his return to Versailles from the humiliating visit which he made to Paris three days after the capture of the Bastille, he

seemed to find consolation in repeating, 'Thank God, no blood has been shed, and I swear that *no drop of French blood shall ever be shed* by my orders.' This humane resolution, adds Madame Campan, he repeated too often and too loudly for the circumstances in which he was placed. What a deluge of blood this tenderness brought on him, his family, France, and the world!

We must now revert to some circumstances that more particularly affect the Queen herself. We had believed that the publication of Madame Campan's work had extinguished for ever the calumnies against the Queen's personal character, but we regret to find them revived near thirty years after that publication in Lord Holland's '*Foreign Reminiscences.*'

It will be asked—as we, after the first few pages, began to ask ourselves—how it was that a man so clever and so amiable as Lord Holland was thought, could write, and, above all, leave for publication, so stupid, malevolent, and indecent a work as this is universally admitted to be.* The logical mode of solving this difficulty would be to deny the premises, and to say that the author of such a book could by no possibility be either good-natured or clever. That, however, would not be just. Lord Holland, generally speaking, was both; but there were topics and times on and at which he was neither—and of these *aspera tempora fandi* this unhappy volume was the product.

Our solution is this: strong, violent, party feeling is not incompatible with great personal good-nature, nor, we need hardly add, with eminent abilities. Nay, these qualities have rather a tendency to inflame the partisan spirit; for personal good-nature cements political friendships, and quick talents sharpen political hostility. There were, besides, in Lord Holland's particular case, some circumstances which tended still more decidedly to warp his understanding and to sour his temper on political subjects. Born in 1773, he was sixteen at the taking of the Bastille, and those who remember the violent and factious course of Mr. Fox's political life from that time to the death of Mr. Pitt will easily understand the influence that it must have had on the sentiments of his

* It turns out that Lord Holland left in the work, and his son had printed, several still more discreditable passages than now appear; but some more prudent friend seems to have intervened, and procured the cancelling of several pages throughout the volume, where blanks appear in lieu of suppressed passages too bad to be published.

affectionate and admiring nephew. When Lord Holland went abroad in 1791, the name of *Fox* was a kind of revolutionary passport, and wherever he went he probably found himself looked upon with suspicion, or at least coolness, by all that were attached to the ancient *régime*, and caressed, flattered, and *fêté*, by all the partisans of Revolution. What society would he be disposed to frequent—what confidences was he likely to receive—but those which might be supposed to be congenial to the nephew of Fox? Those considerations afford the least unfavourable, and, probably, the truest explanation of the leading peculiarities of Lord Holland's book.

But whatever grains of allowance we may admit for the peculiarities of Lord Holland's personal position, or with whatever indulgence experience may have taught us to look at the extravagance of party feeling, they never can excuse either deliberate perversions of fact, nor even the repetition of misstatements which a moderate exercise of inquiry and candour must have detected, nor, above all, the injustice and wanton cruelty of the aspersions on female character which form perhaps the most remarkable, and certainly the most painful, feature of his work. We should exhaust our reader's patience, if we were to endeavour to hunt Lord Holland through all the mazes of his defamatory gossip: we here limit ourselves to the case of the Queen of France, and shall endeavour to test his credit by examining his statements, first by the comparison and contrast of his own testimony, and secondly by the help of evidence which happens to be afforded *aliundè*.

'I can only vouch'—he says *in limine*—'for the anecdotes I record, by assuring my readers that I believe them. I repeat them as they were received and understood by me from what appeared a *sufficient authority*.'

And yet, when we come to the details, we find that there is hardly one of his *authorities* that he does not in some way discredit. For instance—still confining ourselves to the special case—he relies on the evidence of Madame Campan, and makes it indeed the foundation of all his calumnies against Marie Antoinette, but by-and-by talks of her as '*disingenuous* and *concealing the truth*;' and, of all the witnesses on whom he professes to rely, there is not, as we remember, one whom he does not also try to discredit.

This, which seems at first sight a strange and puzzling inconsistency, had however a secret motive—most of his witnesses

happen to relate here and there some insulated fact which Lord Holland thinks capable of receiving a defamatory turn—while the great mass of their evidence tends directly and decidedly the other way—as especially in the statements of Madame Campan, and MM. Dumont and Calonne, as to the Royal Family of France. He therefore quotes and relies on the defamatory item, but endeavours at the same time to discredit the favourable impression which he feels that the testimony *taken all together* could not fail to produce.

Having thus opened to our readers a general view of the temper in which the book was written, and of the kind of evidence on which it relies, it may seem almost superfluous to say anything of its historical value; but the weight that will be vulgarly given to Lord Holland's name, and the authority that even better informed persons may be disposed to attribute to one who was so long a prominent politician if not a statesman, and for some years a cabinet minister, induce us to examine with peculiar interest the charge which he has revived against the personal character of the martyred Queen of France; and we think our readers will excuse our entering into some detail on this interesting and important case, not so much for the purpose of vindicating the Queen—that has been already done beyond all doubt or question—but as the most decisive test of Lord Holland's taste, candour, and credibility that could be selected.

We must begin by reminding our readers that calumny against the Queen was one of the first engines of the Revolution, and supposed and indeed proved to have been in a more especial degree part of the machinery expressly organized in the view of transferring the sovereign power to the Duke of Orleans. Even before the first ruffle of the revolutionary storm she was the object of the most infamous as well as the most extravagant calumnies; and the outrage to nature exhibited at her trial was but the continuation of a series of charges almost as odious, almost as unnatural—equally false, equally impossible. One of these, the most impossible of all—if there could be degrees of impossibility—Lord Holland does not scruple to produce as an historical *reminiscence*, and he does so under circumstances which justify us in thinking his conduct in this matter one of the strangest and most unaccountable aberrations of an intellect reputed sane that we ever heard of.

The first and most venial fault that we have to find with him in this discreditable affair is, that, even if it were true, it does not belong to *his* reminiscences, and that, he is a mere plagiary*—adopting as his own what, we hope, there is hardly another man in England that would have defiled his fingers with. The story and its refutation had been before the world nearly twenty years prior to Lord Holland's death, in O'Meara's 'Napoleon in Exile,' and in our number for October, 1822, p. 256. O'Meara had said,—

'Madame Campan (continued Napoleon) had a very indifferent opinion of Marie-Antoinette. She told me that a person well known for his attachment to the Queen [Count de Fersen] came to see her at Versailles on the 5th or 6th of October, where he remained all night. The palace was stormed by the populace. Marie-Antoinette fled undressed from her own chamber to that of the King for shelter, and the *lover descended from the window*. On going to seek the Queen in her bed-room, *Madame Campan* found she was absent; but *discovered a pair of breeches* which the favourite had left behind in his haste, and which were immediately recognised.'—*O'Meara*, i. 122.

The Count de Fersen was a Swedish nobleman, Colonel of the regiment of *Royal Suédois* in the service of France. His name was probably used on this occasion because he was really very much in the confidence of the King and Queen, and eighteen months later had a principal share in the flight to Varennes. If M. de Fersen happened to be on the 5th of October at Versailles (of which we have no evidence either way), we have no doubt that he, like every other Royalist gentleman, was at the château all that day and night, to assist in protecting the Royal Family from outrage, and may have been, as fifty other gentlemen certainly were, in the royal closet during that tumultuous night. *This* is the colour which Las Cases in his tenderness for Buonaparte's character wishes to represent *him* as having given to the affair; and—if Fersen *was* then at Versailles—it would certainly be the true one; but nevertheless we do not doubt that Buonaparte told O'Meara the fabulous story which Lord Holland has reproduced.

Now let us examine his Lordship's *Reminiscence* of it.

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* An article in Fraser's Magazine (Feb. 1851) develops Lord Holland's disingenuous (to say the least of it) mode of fabricating *his* 'Reminiscences.'

He introduces it by the following wonderful preamble :—

'Madame Campan was in fact the confidante of Marie-Antoinette's amours. These amours were not numerous, scandalous, or degrading, *but they were amours.*'—p. 18.

Lord Holland, it appears, thought that the adulterous *amours* of a wife, a mother, and a queen might be neither '*scandalous nor degrading.*' We abstain from any comment on this test of his Lordship's appreciation of female character. He proceeds, and we are sorry to be obliged to copy such silly slander,—

'She [Madame Campan] acknowledged to persons, who acknowledged it to me, that she was privy to the intercourse between the Queen and the Duke de Coigny.'—p. 16.

If Madame Campan had been vile enough to make such a confession against *herself*, the very fact would discredit all the rest of her testimony; but why, of the several *persons* to whom the supposed shameless woman told it, and who repeated it to Lord Holland, does he not indicate one? He has no scruple in naming the two ladies stigmatized, but he conceals the intermediate witnesses, to whom no disgrace would have attached. But we need not appeal to moral or inferential evidence. We fortunately have Madame Campan's own distinct testimony on the very point. In exposing and indignantly repelling the long series of calumnies with which the Queen was assailed, she produces indeed the name of the Duke de Coigny—but how?—as confessing any knowledge, or even suspicion of an intrigue?—no, but as the most prominent instance she could give of not merely the falsehood but the absurdity of such slanders! The Queen was not ignorant of them; 'but,' adds Madame Campan, 'confiding in the innocence of her conduct, and in the justice which she knew all the witnesses of her private life must do her, she treated these calumnies with open disdain.' Thus, then, we find Lord Holland imputing on hearsay to Madame Campan the very scandal which she herself had indignantly denied, and circumstantially disproved.

Having disposed of the first falsehood attributed to Madame Campan, we proceed to examine the calumny concerning Count de Fersen, in refutation of which we find evidence stronger than that of any one or two or ten individual witnesses could be.

We have seen Buonaparte's two versions of the Fersen story—here is Lord Holland's:—

'Madame Campan confessed a curious fact, namely, that Fersen was in the Queen's boudoir or bedchamber tête-à-tête with her Majesty on the famous night of the 6th of October. He escaped observation with considerable difficulty in a disguise which she, *Madame Campan, herself procured for him.* This, M. de Talleyrand, though generally somewhat averse to detailing anecdotes disparaging of the royal family of France, has twice recounted to me, and assured me that *he had it from Madame Campan herself.*'—p. 19.

And after this followed, as we have before stated (p. 88), two lines of *asterisks*, containing obviously something which Lord Holland's friends thought still worse.

Our readers will observe on the variance between the two stories—O'Meara's as derived from Buonaparte—Lord Holland's as from Talleyrand—and both, as both pretend, from the one common source of Madame Campan. In one case Madame Campan is an accomplice in disguising the lover; in the other she does not even see him, but finds the clothes which he had left behind, and which were immediately recognised. This discrepancy would only go to the credibility of Madame Campan, if she were the original narrator, as to which it is not worth while to waste a word. We mean at present to confine ourselves to *Lord Holland's* adoption and reproduction of the calumny—a calumny, like the former, on Madame Campan as well as the Queen.

Is it not strange that his Lordship, writing in 1826 (as appears from his *notes*), should have taken no notice of the same story published by O'Meara in 1822, and countenanced to a certain extent by Las Cases's version of *Buonaparte's* statement to him (published a little later), and that, while endeavouring to substantiate *Talleyrand's* report against the 'disingenuous silence of Madame Campan's Memoirs,' he does not avail himself of the obvious corroboration which it would receive from *Buonaparte's* statement that she had told him that Fersen had been in the royal apartments that night? We think we are here entitled to retaliate on his Lordship, and to say that *his* 'silence' also is 'disingenuous.' But we are constrained to go a step further, and to confess our disbelief that Talleyrand could have told the story as having *himself* had it from Madame Campan. He may have said that she told it to Buonaparte, who related it to him, and what Lord Holland describes as his own *inaccurate memory* may have dropped a link in the chain. We suggest this solution, not from being disposed

to stickle, as Lord Holland does, for Talleyrand's veracity, but because the ex-Bishop of Autun was too well acquainted, and, we believe, too much mixed up,* with both the secret history and the notorious facts of the 5th of October, to have volunteered any allusion to that very ticklish subject, and, above all, to have ventured to commit himself in any way to a story, to the absurdity of which, if the matter came to be inquired into, he must necessarily have been the first contradictory witness. But however that may be,—whether the falsehood be Buonaparte's, Talleyrand's, or Lord Holland's—it is utterly impossible that Madame Campan could have told the story as related by any of them; for she left behind her her own written evidence—and the great *Procedure* or legal inquiry before the *Cour du Châtelet* in 1790 had already established the fact—that *Madame Campan*—the supposed eye-witness and accomplice—*happened* NOT *to have been in attendance on the Queen on the celebrated day or night of the 5th of October!*—which by another, by no means unimportant, 'inaccuracy' Lord Holland calls the 6th of October. Thus then vanishes all of the story that rests on Madame Campan's presence and co-operation in and confession of the guilty scene: but that is not all.

Even if Madame Campan had chanced to be in attendance that night, the substantial fact of the presence of a lover is in itself *absolutely impossible.* On that point we must take leave to quote part of the indignant exposure which we made of O'Meara's version of this calumny in October, 1822:—

'This diabolical story fixes a more indelible disgrace on Buonaparte's character than anything we have ever heard concerning him. This abominable slander of that heroic woman may be placed by the side of the before-unparalleled calumny with which at her trial Hébert insulted human nature. If Madame Campan had told Buonaparte this horrible tale, *he* must have known it to have been false. The scene and the circumstances of the night between the 5th and the 6th of October are too notorious to leave any doubt how, and where, and with whom the unhappy Queen passed *every moment* of that horrible interval. Everybody knows that the palace had been blockaded from an early hour in the evening

* It is a small but not unimportant fact, that on the morning of the 6th, when the Duke of Orleans arrived—a little before 8 A.M.—from Paris at Versailles, to take, we may almost say, command of the mob—at least to countenance and encourage the insurrection—he *alighted* not at the château—not at his own residence—not even at the National Assembly—but at *the Bishop of Autun's!*

by a blood-thirsty mob, who particularly besieged the apartment of the Queen, the female part of the crowd showing the aprons in which they intended, they said, to carry off—why should we pollute *our* language with such horrors?—*les entrailles de l'Autrichienne, dont elles feraient des cocardes!* The windows of the Queen's apartment are about thirty feet from the ground; and it was *this* very night of horrors that Buonaparte affected to believe the Queen had dedicated to an adulterous intrigue! and it was from *these* windows and into *this* crowd that he supposed the naked lover to have escaped! No!-not in all the obscene and absurd libels of the Revolution was there anything so false and so absurd as this. It was reserved for Buonaparte and O'Meara, and it is worthy of them.'—*Q. R.*, xxviii. 257.

We at that time little expected to have occasion to reproduce these observations with any reference to such a man as Lord Holland. In addition to the foregoing general statement, we then entered into various details, confirming, what was evident on the first aspect of the case, the impossibility—the material, physical impossibility—of the alleged circumstance. Lord Holland might perhaps say that he was not bound to read, and still less to credit, the Quarterly Review; but as he professed to have read the Memoirs of Madame Campan, he ought not to have suppressed her assertion that *she had not been in or near the Queen's apartment that night;* or, if he chose to disbelieve her, he might have looked into a very accessible book—the report of the evidence taken before the *Châtelet*, and printed by order of the National Assembly (*ante*, p. 44)—from which we shall, for the more complete satisfaction of our readers, quote a few passages, accounting, by the evidence of the most respectable witnesses, for every moment of the Queen's time during the evening and night of the 5th of October.

A hundred witnesses prove that from the time—about 5 P.M.—when the Parisian mob had surrounded the palace until past two o'clock in the morning, the King, the Queen, and Madame Elizabeth were *together* under the eyes not only of the whole Court, but of a vast number of other persons, deputies, officers, ladies, and gentlemen, who from loyalty or curiosity crowded all the apartments of the palace. A number of these persons were examined—a few only need be cited.

The Vicomte de la Châtre (afterwards duke and peer of France and ambassador in England), at that time a Deputy to the National Assembly, 127th witness, deposes that

'between five and six o'clock in the evening of the 5th, hearing that the mob had besieged the palace, and that the King and Queen were in danger, he thought it his duty to endeavour to reach their Majesties. He got in with *great difficulty*, and found in the King's ante-room, called the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, an *enormous crowd;* and amongst others, *Madame Necker*, *Madame de Staël*, *Madame de Beauvau*, &c.;—that this crowd was still there as long as he himself remained, which was till *half-past twelve* at night, when the King desired such of the gentlemen as were deputies to return to the hall of the Assembly with M. Mounier, their president, who had been for a couple of hours with their Majesties with a deputation from the Assembly.'—*Procédure Criminelle du Châtelet de Paris.*

M. de Frondeville, President of the Parliament of Normandy, a member of the Assembly, 177th witness, deposes,

'about eight o'clock in the evening I went to the King's apartment, which, as well as the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, was full of various persons, where I remarked nothing particular, but a *deep and general consternation.* I remained there about two hours, when I went to the Assembly, but found there a very few of my colleagues lost in a crowd of many hundred men and women of the mob. . . . I then returned immediately to the *Queen's apartment*, where all, *except herself*, seemed to be in consternation. Several persons arriving successively announced the approach of the army of Paris under Lafayette; the consternation increased; the *Queen alone* showed not the slightest terror, but endeavoured to encourage the persons about her. It was now midnight, when some gentlemen came to the door and requested me to step out; their object was to engage me to obtain an order from the Queen for the horses in the royal stable to be employed in endeavouring to save the royal family in case of an attack. I undertook to do so, and applied to Madame Elizabeth, who immediately went to speak to the Queen, who had gone for a moment into another room. The Queen came back and told me, "I consent to give you the order that you ask, but only on this condition, that, if the King is in any danger, you will make immediate use of it; but if I only am in danger, you are not to make use of it." By-and-by, the Parisian army having arrived and occupied the outward posts of the Château, the Queen went to bed, and I continued wandering about the apartments for a considerable time, when, seeing that all was quiet, I went home, where I remained about two hours, at the end of which, hearing the attack on the Château was renewed, I hastened back and endeavoured to get into the Château, but found it impossible to make my way through the crowd, and I was forced to become a spectator of

massacres and horrors of such public notoriety that I need not recapitulate them.'—*Ibid.*

There is a crowd of other witnesses to the same effect up to the time—a little after *two* in the morning—when the Queen retired to her bedchamber, and then commences the evidence of her two bedchamber ladies—Madame Thibault (the 81st witness) and Madame Auguié (104th witness)—to the following effect—that when M. Lafayette had assured their Majesties that all was safe for the night, and that his army, occupying all the exterior posts of the Château, had quieted the noise and tumult of the mob, the Queen, wearied out by the toils and troubles of that eventful day, retired to her bedchamber, where, attended by these two ladies, she undressed and went to bed (*between half-past two and three*), desiring them to do the same. They, fortunately, were too much alarmed for their mistress to do so; but, summoning their own *femmes-de-chambre* to join them, the four women kept watch over the Queen—sitting down clustered together with their backs against the door of the Queen's bed-chamber, which had another but secret communication with the King's apartment, to be mentioned presently. In this feverish state they remained for near two hours; but about *half-past four* in the morning the attack on the palace was renewed. The Queen's apartment, especially indicated to the mob by their leaders, was first invaded. The Gardes-du-corps, who most gallantly attempted to defend their respective posts (*antè*, p. 82), were overpowered, severely wounded, and left for dead. The last, who was stationed at the door of the Queen's ante-chamber, M. de Miomandre, had barely time to call to the ladies at the bedchamber door to *save the Queen!* After making for a few moments a desperate resistance at the door of the ante-chamber, he fell covered with wounds—but those few moments saved, for that time, the life of the Queen! The ladies hastened to her bedside, and hurried her away, with no covering but her night-dress and one petticoat, by a passage that communicated from the ante-room to the King's apartment. While the Queen thus sought the King, He, alarmed for her, proceeded to her chamber through the secret passage before mentioned, which communicated from his bedchamber to *hers*, and *of which he alone had the key*—(what a place for an adulterous intrigue!)—but not finding her, she having passed through the ante chamber, the

King then hurried back to his own apartment, and had there the momentary consolation of finding his wife and children.

Such is the history, hour by hour, of the celebrated evening and night of the 5th, and of the early morning of the 6th of October—published as to all the leading facts in the judicial proceedings of the Châtelet—repeated by all the historians—recapitulated (with the addition of a few minor circumstances) in *Madame Campan's Memoirs*. The calumny published by O'Meara in 1822 was then, as completely as now, refuted by us; and yet Lord Holland, writing, as appears from his notes, in 1826—correcting his MS. down at least to 1837—and not dying till 1840, has chosen to ignore, as it were, all the preceding evidence, and to leave behind him for posthumous publication an additionally offensive version of this infamous slander.

What can be said for him?—what for the editor?—what for those who, intrusted with the suppression of *any* portion of the work, have not had the decency to suppress this?

After this great calumny the following misrepresentation may seem trifling; but we think that it shows even more conclusively that the *acharnement* against the Queen with which the Jacobins originally infected Lord Holland had fermented in his head to a virulence which surpassed that of the Jacobins themselves, and had, on the most charitable theory possible, obscured his understanding.

In all the historical relations of the Queen's execution, and even in the most ferocious of the contemporary publications, she is represented to have died with courage and dignity. But this last reluctant tribute to truth Lord Holland cannot bring himself to pay; he could not, indeed, venture to impute to her, in contradiction to the whole world, any visible pusillanimity, but he insidiously describes her tranquillity as the effect, not of courage, but of the excess of fear.

'She was *insensible* when led to the scaffold.'—p. 20.

And this insinuation is so adroitly managed that we have little doubt that Lord Holland, if reproached with it during his life, would have pleaded that he had the most authentic authority for it in the *Moniteur* and other contemporary journals, which had all described her as '*insensible*.' But what the journals really said was this, that her courage and tranquillity were so great that she even

seemed to be *insensible to the insulting cries of the mob which surrounded the cart* that conveyed her slowly to the place of execution. This misrepresentation, at once so sly and so gross, seems to us to weigh so heavily on Lord Holland's character, that we think it right to give the official account of her behaviour at her trial and execution, published in the *Moniteur* and the *Journal du Tribunal Révolutionnaire* of the day, where his Lordship would probably have said that he found the expression which he has so uncandidly or so stupidly perverted:—

'During the trial she almost always maintained a calm and steady demeanour [*contenance calme et assurée*]. . . . . She heard the sentence without betraying any sign of emotion.'

To appreciate fully the dignity and strength of mind which she exhibited at that awful moment, it must be recollected that she had been for near three months buried in the 'filthiest and dampest' dungeon of the Conciergerie, without even the consolation of being alone, for 'a police soldier watched her night and day, and never *lost sight of her*.' The sentence was pronounced at half-past four o'clock in the morning, after she had undergone for two days and nights,* before that brutal tribunal, personal insult and moral torture worse than the death to which she had been foredoomed. The Journals proceed:—

'At eleven o'clock [16th Oct. 1793] Marie Antoinette, Widow Capet, in an undress of white linen, was led to execution in the same way as other criminals, accompanied by a *constitutional* priest in a layman's dress. Antoinette all along the way [about a mile and a half, which occupied above an hour] appeared to see with indifference the armed force which, to the amount of above 30,000 men, formed a double line through the streets she passed. Her countenance showed neither dejection nor haughtiness [*ni abattement ni fierté*], and she appeared *insensible* to the cries of *Vive la République! à bas la Tyrannie!* which she never ceased to hear during her passage. She said little to the confessor [who was an apostate priest, whose services she had declined]. She appeared to notice the tricoloured flags hung out in the streets. She observed also the inscriptions on the fronts of the houses.† When arrived at the Place de la Révolution [Louis XV.] she turned her eyes towards the Tuileries, and

* The trial began on the morning of the 14th Oct. and ended at 30 min. past 4 A.M. on the morning of the 16th, and there is no note in any of the reports of any intermission of the proceedings.

† These flags and inscriptions were features of the Revolution new to the Queen.

her countenance gave signs of strong [*vive*] emotion. She then ascended the scaffold with sufficient courage [*elle est monté sur l'échafaud avec assez de courage*]—at a quarter past twelve her head fell!'—*Moniteur*, Oct. 26th, 1793.

Again, we ask, what can be said for an English nobleman who thus perverts the scant and reluctant justice paid to that heroic woman even by her murderers into an additional insult?

Having thus vindicated the unfortunate Queen from the aspersions on her personal conduct, we think it not superfluous to say a word concerning an impression which, Madame Campan tells us, had been suggested to and entertained by the Queen, that the English ministry, and especially Mr. Pitt, fomented, by intrigues and bribes, the earlier movements of the Revolution. This would seem to justify a doubt of Madame Campan's veracity; for it is hard to believe that the Queen should have been so ignorant of the real state of affairs in France, and of the wishes and powers of our ministry, as to have believed for a moment so absurd, or, as M. Bertrand de Molleville more indignantly calls it, '*so atrocious a calumny*' (vol. i. p. 379). We are not however disposed to doubt Madame Campan's statement; we believe the Queen might at a very early period have expressed the suspicion attributed to her—but the grounds of that suspicion, however erroneous, may be rationally explained. In the first place, the conduct of France, in abetting the American insurgents against their sovereign, was disapproved of by a large party in France, and in their private minds by the King and Queen themselves; they, therefore, and the public in general, admitting that retaliation would be natural, were ready to believe that it was attempted. Secondly, a constitution similar to that of England was the professed object of the reformers, and the *Anglomanes*, as they were emphatically called, were the most violent partizans of the Revolution; the English nation, therefore, was not unnaturally supposed to favour the projects of its panegyrists and imitators. Thirdly, the Duke of Orleans often came amongst us, and mixed a good deal in our society and amusements, and, though that made little sensation here, it made a great one in France; for he was, we believe, the first prince of the blood of St. Louis who ever visited England. The *English* and the *Duke of Orleans* were, therefore, easily united in the opinion of the rest of the royal family, who were

jealous of that prince's proceedings, though they might have known that the Duke was no favourite either with our court or our ministry. Fourthly, a rebellion against the *King* being, as it seemed, quite inexplicable in a nation which piqued itself on an idolatrous love for its monarchs, it became necessary to discover some *external* cause for so strange an alteration—and where could that be so rationally found as in the example of a people who had beheaded one sovereign and expelled another? The Baron de Bezenval, who was much in the confidence of the Queen, and who commanded the troops in Paris, at the first riot in the Faubourg St. Antoine, gives, in a few words, the grounds on which he *for a moment* believed that England fomented these disturbances. After describing the destruction of M. Reveillon's manufactory, and stating that it was not done by the Parisians, but by people hired from the country to commit this disorder—'This,' he adds, 'satisfied me that the riot of the Faubourg St. Antoine was the explosion of a mine charged by hostile hands. I thought it *must come* from England, not *daring, at that time*, to suspect *altogether* the Duke of Orleans.'—*Mém. de Bezenval*, vol. ii. p. 348.

'The atrocious calumny, however,' says M. Bertrand (*ib.*), 'gained so much credit, that the English ambassador, the Duke of Dorset, thought proper to refute it officially;' and in a letter of the 26th July, 1789, requested M. de Montmorin, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to communicate to the National Assembly a formal denial that either the English government or English subjects had in any degree fomented the commotions that had for some time past agitated the capital.

These assurances the ambassador received orders from London to renew and confirm; and after the sack of the Tuileries on the 10th August, there was found, in the celebrated iron safe, among the King's secret papers, a letter to his Majesty from M. de Calonne in London, dated 9th April, 1790, in which he states that, understanding that malevolent persons have endeavoured to persuade him that England has been, in revenge for the loss of America, fomenting these disturbances, he thinks it his duty to assure his Majesty that nothing can be more contrary to truth, nothing more opposite to either the private sentiments of the King or more distant from the policy of his ministers; and that, for further assurance of this fact, the King had directed

Mr. Pitt, 'to declare, in the most positive manner, that such reports were totally unfounded, and that his Majesty had always felt, and continued to feel, the most lively and sincere desire to see those troubles terminated in the manner most conducive to the honour and happiness of the King of France and his subjects.' Of Mr. Pitt's letter, dated the 6th April, 1790, Calonne enclosed a copy; but it was not produced at the King's trial, nor was it till very lately, and after a long search, that we found it. But, in the meanwhile, the reproduction of the calumny in these memoirs of Madame Campan, and in those of the Baron de Bezenval and of MM. de Bouillé, lately republished, made us desirous of obtaining whatever further evidence might exist. We therefore have made *personal inquiries* from persons of the highest rank, who were well acquainted with all the affairs of the day; we have consulted political friends and colleagues of Mr. Pitt;* we have had access to the public and private correspondence of our ministers and ambassadors at the principal courts of Europe, and especially at Paris;—and we can conscientiously declare that we have not found the slightest ground for suspecting that England fomented, directly or indirectly, any of the revolutionary disturbances of France; but that, on the contrary, the English sovereign and ministers *viewed them with unfeigned regret*—a feeling from the most public manifestation of which they were only restrained by their respect and regard for the French monarch himself; by their reluctance to incur the risk of offending the susceptibility of the French people; and by their anxiety not to afford the ill-disposed in either country the slightest excuse for accusing Louis of having asked, or the King of England of having offered, any interference in the internal affairs of France.

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* I consulted individually on this point Lords Grenville, Westmoreland, Spencer, and Chatham, the only survivors of Mr. Pitt's Cabinet; and Lords Wellesley, Liverpool, Harrowby, Mulgrave, Sidmouth, and Farnborough, Messrs. Canning, Rose, and Huskisson, and indeed every other person then living who had held high office in Mr. Pitt's first administration, and, as might be expected, all solemnly denied that there was the slightest colour for any such imputation.—1855.

ESSAY III.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, JANUARY 1823.]

THE JOURNEYS TO VARENNES AND BRUSSELS, JUNE 1791.

1. *Royal Memoirs. A Narrative of the Journey to Varennes.* By H.R.H. the Duchess of Angoulême. *A Narrative of the Journey to Brussels and Coblentz in* 1791. By Monsieur, now Louis XVIII. King of France. Murray, 1823.
2. Mémoires sur *l'Affaire de Varennes.* Paris, 1823.

FROM the sanguinary outrage of the 6th October, and the violent and ignominious abduction of the King and Queen to Paris, every thinking mind must have presaged, in a general way, their fall and their fate; but the local circumstances of the Château des Tuileries, the new residence, or rather prison, to which they were led, aggravated their personal sufferings, and afforded and created occasions and opportunities of additional disorders and violences that no body, probably not even the authors of the movement, could have originally foreseen. As those special circumstances had a considerable influence, not only on the fate of the old monarchy, but of several succeeding governments, a short sketch of this interesting and important locality will be, we think, not unacceptable to our readers.

At the western extremity of Paris there stood, up to the time of Francis I., an irregular mass of Gothic towers called the Louvre, in which, as was the custom of those early ages, were combined a palace, a prison, and a fortress which protected the town on the west side as the Bastille did on the east. Francis, finding this

* The original Article comprised a review of the Duchess of Angoulême's '*Memoirs of what passed in the Temple*;' but, to avoid repetition, this is transferred to the more general account of the Captivity in the Temple in the Fifth Essay. Several Notes, however, which I had contributed to the translation of the Narratives of the Journeys to Varennes and Brussels, for which there was not room in the original review, are now incorporated with it.

building unfit for a residence and not worth repairing, began, and his son Henry II. completed, a more regular edifice in the Italian taste, which is now the western side of the *Vieux* Louvre. This new edifice was, however, soon surrounded by the encroachments of the increasing town, and his widow, Catherine de Medicis, wishing to have a residence of her own when her son should occupy the Louvre, began in the open country to the westward, on a piece of ground called from the use then made of it *Les Tuileries*, the magnificent palace now known by that name; and her sons, three successive Kings of France, continued the work by additional wings and pavilions. In the mean while the town continued to increase, and the space between the two palaces was covered with buildings, and grew, and continued, up to 1804, to be a closely built and densely inhabited quarter of the city. Whether in pursuance of Catherine's original design, or from his own, her second son, Charles IX., determined to unite his two palaces by the celebrated gallery along the river-side. This was continued by his brother, Henry III., and completed by Henry IV., so far, at least, that we know that on the 1st May, 1610, exactly a fortnight before the day of his death, he walked from the Tuileries to the Louvre along '*la grande galerie*' arm-in-arm with the Duc de Guise and the Marshal de Bassompière. We note this because some writers attribute the completion of the gallery to Louis XIII. and to Louis XIV.; nay, we have even met persons, in France and England, so ignorant as to attribute both the design and execution to Buonaparte. No doubt both Louis XIII. and XIV. continued the works at both palaces, but it seems certain that the *gallery* was so far completed by Henry IV. that the espousals of the Prince de Condé with Mademoiselle de Montmorenci were celebrated there in 1609, and that Henry himself *walked through it*, as we have said, in 1610. Buonaparte's only, but not inglorious, share in the gallery, was the splendid execution of a design proposed and even begun in the reign of Louis XVI., for appropriating it to the reception and exhibition of objects of science and of art.*

But the vast space now open between the two palaces was, to a recent period, covered with houses, which ran up close to both. The front of the Tuileries, especially, was encumbered and disfigured by a number of mean irregular buildings, domestic offices, porters' lodges, barracks, stables, and the like, which formed

* I have added, as an appendix to this article, some notices on this subject.—1855.

four courts, of which that to the south was called *La Cour des Princes;* the next and largest, occupying about a third of the whole space, called *La Cour Royale,* formed the main approach to the palace. It was enclosed by an ordinary wall, through which there were close wooden gates, from *La Place du Carrousel.* This *Place* was a kind of square, where three or four streets met: about what was its centre, Buonaparte's Arch now occupies the site where the first permanent *Guillotine* had been erected. The domestic offices and adjuncts that disfigured this side of the Tuileries seem to have been almost necessary, if the palace were to be a residence. Their removal — so advantageous in an artistical view — has rendered it a most uncomfortable, and, in the neighbourhood of so turbulent a population, dangerous residence, for it has no internal light or air; every entrance and window open on public thoroughfares, and are of course subjected to the sight, and possibly to the *fire,* of the people in the surrounding houses and streets. During the time that Louis XVI. and his family inhabited it, they could take no exercise but on the terrace next the river, and there only early in the morning; and even that was soon interdicted to them by the increasing impatience and insolence of the mob; and the Queen herself complained to Dumouriez, that 'even in the summer evenings she could not open the windows for a little fresh air without being exposed to the grossest invectives and menaces.'

It is evident that an edifice so circumstanced, however noble as a palace for royal representation,* was a very unsafe one as a royal residence.* It had not, however, been so occupied for near a century till the violences of the 6th of October dragged the royal family from Versailles, and confined them in this stately prison, in which they languished, rather than lived, under a close surveillance, daily insults, and frequent perils, till the crowning catastrophe of the *tenth of August;* which, atrocious as it was in its purpose and disastrous in its results, had the unforeseen consequence of removing the obstructions we have described, and making the first opening towards that magnificent esplanade which now extends from the Tuileries to the Louvre. That fatal day sent the monarch to a stronger prison, but it liberated the palaces.

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* The Convention, when they occupied it, found it equally insecure. The hall where they sat (the theatre) was in a frequent state of siege, often attacked and twice at least stormed.

Its first local effect was the conflagration and destruction of the out-buildings just described, and the opening the space in front of the Château, about as far as the arch and iron rails that we now see; but all the rest of that quarter of the town — streets, hotels, churches — still remained untouched, till another crime contributed to much more extensive improvements. The explosion of the infernal machine, on the 24th December, 1800, as the First Consul was going to the opera, through one of those streets (Rue de Sainte Nicaise), destroyed or injured no less than forty-six houses. So extensive a demolition seems to have given Buonaparte the first idea of clearing all the space between the two palaces, and enclosing it on the north side by a gallery similar to the old gallery on the south. This gigantic plan was, however, too expensive and too much complicated with private interests to be rapidly pursued; and it appears indeed that neither Buonaparte nor his architects had been able to decide how the local and architectural difficulties of bringing the area to one level and the edifices into one symmetrical character were to be overcome; and though the succeeding governments have persevered in the design, the progress has been hesitating and slow. Its completion seems to be reserved for another generation: but the change—the obliteration, we may say—of the main features of the locality has been already so complete that many important events would be imperfectly understood without a retrospective reference to the scene as it appeared prior to August, 1792.*

* See the plan prefixed to this volume. These observations on the Tuileries were originally scattered through other essays not now reprinted, but are here brought together for the use of the readers of this volume. The great work of completing the projected junction of the Tuileries and the Louvre has been of late carried out with great architectural magnificence and effect; and the palaces are better protected from a popular *coup de main* by the enclosure on the north side, which makes the whole something of a fortress; but I do not understand how it can ever be made more than a palace for show and ceremony. If Louis Philippe, too confident in his popularity with so changeable a people, had not made it a family residence, and been thereby embarrassed with a crowd of women and children, whose safety could not be perilled, the 24th February, 1848, would probably have had a different result. M. de de Talleyrand seems to have foreseen something of this danger to which the Palais Royal was also liable. The day or two after his arrival in London, in 1830, as ambassador, I met him at dinner at the Duke of Wellington's. He talked freely and not reverently of the new revolution, and represented the King as very little *his own master* in the whole affair. Some one mentioning the inconvenience of his position in Paris, Talleyrand said '*Oui;*' and then added, with his peculiar look and tone of grave pleasantry, 'avant de partir j'ai pris la liberté de *conseiller à Sa Majesté de faire un grand coup politique—mais un très grand coup.*' We were all attention and curiosity. '*C'était d'aller passer, aussitôt qu'elle le pourrait, quelques jours à Neuilly.*'—[1855.]

The events that subsequently developed themselves have induced us to make these general observations as to the inconvenience and danger of having the *domestic residence of a sovereign surrounded by the obstructions and intrusions of a great city*, but in the state in which the château *then* was—separated from the town by gardens, walls, and buildings of its own, it seemed as safe as any town palace could be; and, at all events, the King had no alternative choice, for the Louvre, besides its being locally still less isolated, was wholly unfurnished and partly dilapidated, and indeed it is only surprising how the Tuileries, unvisited as it had so long been by its masters, could, on so sudden an emergency, and in so short time, have afforded even decent accommodation for the Royal Family. We find, however, no complaints on that score after the first day or two; nor do we suppose that either of the two parties that concurred in dragging the King from Versailles, had reckoned on the local advantages which the Tuileries afterwards afforded them. The object of the Orleanists was to bring him within the reach and power of the Parisian mob; and that of Lafayette to be able to be Viceroy over him by means of the National Guard; and both were in the first instance satisfied to degrade his authority and to secure his person.

For the first few days, however, all was well—Paris was in transports of joy—the mob at their victory, the soberer citizens at the honour of having their King, for the first time for a hundred years, amongst them, and at the hopes of profit in their business from the immediate residence of the Court; and the mortification and anxieties of the King and Queen themselves were alleviated by this sunny but deceitful gleam of popularity. The disloyalty and ingratitude of the people of Versailles tended also to reconcile their majesties to their new abode, and they hoped that the *gêne* of their necessary residence in Paris would be compensated by a more quiet domesticity at St. Cloud, where they hoped to pass their summers—and passed but one.

The King being thus settled in Paris, the Assembly followed him on the 9th of October, and held its sitting in the palace of the Archbishop of Paris, whence it again removed on the 19th to the *Manège*, or riding-school—an appurtenance to the palace of the Tuileries which adjoined the north terrace of the Tuileries-gardens, nearly at the junction of the present Rues

de Rivoli and de Castiglione. This location of the Assembly was, for the King's public interests and domestic quiet, very unlucky. It brought the great revolutionary power into more immediate contact with him, and subjected him and his family to the individual as well as collective surveillance of its members. Both Mirabeau and Vergniaud employed the prospect of the Palace from the windows of the *Manège* as a topic of insult and menace :—

"'" I see," said Mirabeau, soon after the removal of the Assembly to Paris, "from the tribune whence I speak, that window from which a French sovereign, under the influence of execrable advisers, fired the shot that gave the signal of the massacre of St. Bartholomew;" "and I," added Vergniaud two years later, "see from the place where I speak that same palace, where wicked ministers deceive and lead astray that King, whom the Constitution has given us; I see, I repeat, the windows of that palace, where chains are preparing for delivering us over to the House of Austria, and where they are plotting to replunge us in slavery, after dragging us through the horrors of anarchy and all the furies of a civil war."'—(*Moniteur*, 12*th March*, 1792.)

But a still graver, because more practical, danger ensued; the Assembly declared that the north terrace of the garden was within its precincts, and as its principal communications were in that direction, and of course open to the public, the palace and the garden had no longer any barrier on that side, and in a short time the King had no authority over either the courts or gardens, or even the external doors, all the posts being supplied by the National Guards, over whom he had no command, or even control.*

The royal family were, in fact, prisoners from the first moment; but the restraint upon them became gradually more scandalous and alarming; and in the course of 1790 plans of escape were pressed upon the King, which, however, produced no result. On the 28th February, 1791, the mob made an irruption into the palace, and insulted, disarmed, and maltreated the King's attendants and several gentlemen (who had come thither to pay their respects to

* Kersaint, one of the most moderate of the Girondins, insisted, a couple of months prior to the attack of the 20th June, on the *People's* right to *their own garden*. '*La nation loje Louis aux Tuileries; mais je ne vois nulle part qu'elle lui ait donné la jouissance exclusive de ce jardin.*'—*Mon.* 26 *Avr.* 1792. Another deputy, Brival, pushed this insolence still farther.—*Rev. de Paris*, 7 Mai.

the monarch), whom they calumniously denominated *Chevaliers du Poignard*, and the palace was, in truth, placed in a state of siege, and guarded and sentinelled not only at every external issue but in the interior passages, nay, even in the corridors of communication between the King's and Queen's private apartments. Soon after this, the King, who had been seriously ill from anxiety of mind and the want of exercise, was anxious to go to St. Cloud, for quiet and change of air: Easter was also approaching, and the pious Louis wished to be able to perform the religious duties of that season in tranquillity. In the afternoon of the 18th of April, having gotten into his carriage to proceed to St. Cloud, he was arrested by the mob, and neither the popularity nor even the military power of General Lafayette could operate his release; he was obliged to submit to this monstrous insult and cruelty (*ante*, p. 37). This event determined the unhappy monarch to pursue the plan which had been already in agitation for endeavouring to escape from the humiliating and alarming situation in which he and his helpless family were placed. He resolved to make his escape to Montmédy, the only asylum that he could depend upon, short of quitting France, which he was so scrupulously determined not to do, that he would not even consent to shorten the danger of his journey by crossing the frontier, though to enter France again next day.

This attempt, commonly called the *Journey to Varennes*, from a little town of that name about 150 miles from Paris, where the royal family was arrested, was in itself one of the most important facts of the Revolution—we might almost say of modern history.

No insulated event, perhaps, ever had more important consequences than the King's arrest at Varennes; others perhaps as great would have followed his escape, but they, at least, would not have been the events which followed his arrest—the 20th of June, the 10th of August, the 2nd of September—the executions of the King, of the Queen, and of Madame Elizabeth—the anarchy, the republic, the consulate, the empire, could never have occurred: what *else* might have happened would be a vain and idle conjecture, but it is highly interesting to contemplate the progress of this affair, on which the destinies of the world vibrated, and to observe by what an extraordinary—what an almost miraculous combination of petty accidents the design was defeated—and defeated only *at the moment and at the place* where the danger

might have been considered, according to all calculation and reasoning, as past.

But, besides its political importance, the journey to Varennes has an interest of another kind as affording an extraordinary instance of the difficulty of ascertaining historical truth. There have been published at least twelve narratives by eye-witnesses of, and partakers in, those transactions, viz. the Duchess d'Angoulême, who, then twelve years old, accompanied her parents in their flight—the Marquis and his eldest son Count Louis de Bouillé, who were charged with the general arrangement—the Duke de Choiseul-Stainville, and Messrs. de Goguelat, Damas, Raigecourt, and Deslons, who commanded detachments along the road—Messrs. de Moustier and de Valory, two gardes-du-corps who accompanied the king—five or six subordinate persons, who speak as to particular portions of the affair—and, finally, M. de Fontanges, Archbishop of Toulouse, who, though not himself an eye-witness, is supposed to have written partly from the information of the Queen and partly from that of M. de Choiseul; and all these narratives contradict each other, some on trivial and some on more essential points, but always in a wonderful and inexplicable manner.

In the sharp controversy which arose (after the Restoration) between the Messrs. de Bouillé on one side, and the Duke de Choiseul and the Baron de Goguelat on the other, in which each party laid the blame of the failure on the other,—in such a controversy, we say, we are not surprised at conflicting views and even statements, but what we cannot so easily account for is that they, *as well as all the other witnesses*, should so directly contradict each other on a variety of points, great and small, where there could be no possible object or interest in misrepresenting the truth. Never have we seen a more comprehensive instance of the fallibility of human testimony.

When the journey was resolved on, there could be no great doubt that—short of quitting France, which the King was resolved not to do voluntarily—his safest refuge would be with the army of the Meuse, then luckily under the command of the Marquis de Bouillé, a general, and we believe the only one, in whose royalist fidelity the King could confide, and who happened to have under his command two or three of the best disposed cavalry regiments of the army—an important consideration, for the general discipline and loyalty of the troops had been very much deteriorated by the

temper of the times. Montmédy, a small but tolerably strong town, about 170 miles from Paris, in the centre of M. de Bouillé's command and close to the frontiers, if a further retreat should become necessary, was selected as his Majesty's first asylum.

The attempt had been originally fixed for the night of Sunday, the 19th of June 1791. The plan was that the royal family were to escape by a glass door* in the south wing of the Tuileries, and, crossing the two courts, *des Princes* and *Cour Royale*, on foot, get into a job-coach which was to be stationed on the Petit Carrousel, at the corner of the Rue de l'Echelle, which was to convey them beyond the barrier of Paris, where a travelling carriage was to be ready to receive them; and the relays of post-horses were to be ordered by a courier, as for ordinary travellers, as far as Varennes, where, there being no post-house, a special relay was provided; and at each stage after Châlons a detachment of cavalry from M. de Bouillé's army was to be ready to prevent interruption, if any should be attempted; and, after a short interval, to follow the royal carriage, picking up each detachment successively, and thus at every stage increasing the force; but the utmost secresy and prudence were enjoined to the officers commanding these detachments, lest their appearance at the stages should excite attention, and lead to opposition and interruption.

The minor military details, and the general conduct of the affair from Châlons forward, was principally entrusted to M. de Goguelat, an officer of Engineers, who had formerly become known to the Queen by having made plans of St. Cloud and Trianon, and he had been subsequently employed in some private missions which he executed in a way that impressed both the King and Queen with an opinion of his activity and sagacity; so that when this journey was resolved upon, M. de Goguelat† was thought of, and was placed on the staff of the Marquis de Bouillé, to be employed by him in the details of the arrangement. To make sure of the time at which the travellers might be expected at the several stages, M de Goguelat made at least one experimental journey; but it

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* See 'B,' on the plan.

† M. de Goguelat had the year before rendered himself remarkable by having rudely insulted the Duke of Orleans, when that Prince presented himself at Court on his return from his mission to England. (*Bertrand de Moleville*, iii. 35.) This spirited indiscretion, which deeply exasperated the Duke, probably increased the confidence of the King and Queen.

was reproached to him that he omitted to calculate on the difference between his own light postchaise and a heavily-laden coach: we need not stop to examine either this charge or M. de Goguelat's explanation, as any delay from that cause must have been inconsiderable. The Duke de Choiseul was colonel of the Royal-Dragons, one of M. de Bouillé's regiments, which was to furnish some of the local detachments, and particularly the first and most important of them at the next stage beyond Châlons, called the Pont de Somme-Velle, whither the Duke, after receiving the King's final orders in Paris, was to precede him by a few hours, to command in person, and where M. de Goguelat, who had been placed under his orders, was to join him with a detachment of 40 dragoons, and assist him in following out the prescribed operations.

The King himself, with the assistance of the Queen and Count de Fersen (*ante*, p. 93), undertook the arrangements of the journey as far as and through Châlons—by much the most perilous part of the way. Fersen was both head and hand; he procured the duplicate of a passport which had been issued for a relation of his, the Baroness de Korff, a Russian lady, and her suite, about to return to her own country. He it was who conducted the correspondence between the King and the Marquis de Bouillé at Metz, and personally with the Duke of Choiseul and the younger M. de Bouillé in Paris. He also provided the travelling-carriage—a berline or coach – which, indeed, he had built for the occasion, and he himself acted as coachman of the town-carriage which was to convey the fugitives beyond the barrier. The distribution of the other parts of the drama was this: Madame de Tourzel, governess '*des Enfans de France*,' was to represent the Baroness de Korff, and Madame Royale, and the Dauphin dressed as a girl, were to be her daughters Amelia and Aglaë. The Queen was to be Madame Rocher, their governess; Madame Elizabeth a female companion under the name of Rosalie; and the King their valet-de-chambre under that of Durand.* Three gentlemen of the gardes-du-corps disbanded in October 1789, MM. de Valory, de Moustier, and de Malden, were to act as servants and couriers. So closely was the royal family watched, that there was considerable

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* It is curious that the assumed name of the Queen should be that of a ferocious woman who was afterwards one of her gaolers in the Temple, and that taken by the King was the name of one of his *Conventionnel* judges.

risk in introducing these gentlemen into the royal apartments; but the Queen, with her usual good sense, thought it better to incur it than not to have some communication and acquaintance with them previous to the actual departure. Accordingly, two days before, they saw the King and her together, and received some general directions and instructions, but were not informed of the precise object or destination. The Queen on this occasion had the forethought to tell them that, as they were to pass for servants, they must be prepared with other names, and that their own baptismal names would be most familiar to them:—de Malden was *John*, de Moustier *Melchior*; de Valory *Francis;* and so they were called during the journey.

Thus far all seems to have been prudent and promising. Let us now see by what a combination of mismanagement and misfortune the whole proceeding was deranged and defeated.

The preparations made may seem to us rather too complicated and cumbrous, but when we recollect the rank, number, and ages of the fugitives, the immense interests at stake, and the rigorous custody in which the Royal Family was held—their personal inexperience and indeed helplessness in any such undertaking, and the jealous and tumultuous spirit that had, like an epidemic insanity, seized the whole nation even in its most remote recesses—we cannot venture to accuse any portion of the arrangements of being at the moment either deficient or superfluous. For instance: the troops stationed at the several relays, instead of securing the progress of the Royal Family, were (as we shall see) *everywhere, without exception*, a danger, and undoubtedly a main cause of all the mischief. Yet who beforehand would have ventured to reject such a precaution? And, again; M. Louis de Bouillé, though doing full justice to the zeal and talents of M. de Fersen, criticises the building a coach of an unusual size, weight, and shape, ill calculated for rapidity, and likely to excite, as he says it did, observation and suspicion. This seems rational; but, on the other hand, we can imagine some at least of M. de Fersen's reasons. In the first place, every line of all the narratives shows how deeply impressed everybody entrusted with the secret were with the danger of giving any alarm.* M. de Fersen

* The extent of isolation and espionage to which the Royal family were subjected may be judged of by this fact, that the frock coat and round hat which

may not have possessed, and may have been unable to borrow or to hire without exciting suspicion, a carriage capable of conveying at least eight persons, and proof against the accidents which, from the then state of the roads, were so frequent as to be considered as almost inevitable.

Now it had happened, the year before, that Count Fersen had ordered for a friend of his in Russia or Sweden a large and strong berline or travelling-coach, exactly suited for the present purpose, and it was therefore quite natural that when the King's escape was first thought of, he should tell the coachmaker that his former work had been so successful that he had been commissioned to order another for the same destination: and as to the excess of weight, which M. de Bouillé complained of, we have the evidence of the Duke de Choiseul, that though it looked very heavy, and had purposely more than the usual proportion of trunks, boots, *vaches*, and imperials, they were in fact all empty, containing nothing whatever but a single gold-laced hat of the King's, which he was to wear on appearing in uniform when he should arrive at the army, and which it was impossible to pack in the small portmanteau in which M. de Choiseul conveyed the rest of the uniform. A few refreshments, and some precautions against the necessity of alighting, were placed in the carriage. It seems therefore that the providing this carriage was a very prudent measure, though it certainly had one unlucky result, which M. Louis de Bouillé does not seem to have known, which is that, notwithstanding a *trial* which M. de Choiseul says was made of it, it had hardly completed the second stage when some mechanical accident occurred, which, as Madame, who alone mentions the circumstance, tells us it required an hour to repair, when the loss of an hour might be the loss of all. But if the carriage had not been a new and sound one, and carrying within itself, as M. de Choiseul tells us, means of repair, how many hours might have been lost by the recurrence of such accidents.*

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the King was to wear, and the travelling dresses and bonnets for the Queen and Madam Elizabeth, and two linen frocks for the children, were furnished by M. de Fersen, and procured by him secretly and under various pretexts.

* *Monsieur*, the same night, had two or three. As a point of vehicular statistics, it may be worth mentioning that the cost of this carriage, ordered by an Ambassador, of the best maker in Paris, and of the most elaborate workmanship, was only 300 louis.

Another arrangement, more really injudicious if it could have been avoided, was giving the King a character that should require any such deportment or exertions as might be expected from a valet-de-chambre: this, however, was a necessity imposed by the description in the borrowed passport, and it happened to have no consequence, as the passports were nowhere compared with the persons, or even asked for till the arrest at Varennes.

There were indeed obvious difficulties in finding any character that the King could have usefully filled on such an occasion, except perhaps that of a medical man; but there was, we suspect, a latent impediment which had more serious consequences. It must not be forgotten that Louis was still King of France, an object of veneration to all those about him; and, modest as he certainly was even to a fault, he was not so low in his own opinion as to doubt his being equal to manage personally the travelling part of the expedition, as well as the preliminary arrangements, on all of which he had been minutely consulted. Some such feeling at least affords the only explanation we can arrive at of the following circumstance.

The Marquis de Bouillé, knowing the King's shyness, indecision, and inexperience in travelling, had (probably in concert with the Queen and Count Fersen) proposed, and the King agreed, that Count Annibal d'Agoult, late major of one of the companies of the Gardes-du-corps, should accompany him, and he was selected as *un homme de tête*, capable of acting and commanding along the road, and of a character to prevent and overcome accidental difficulties. M. d'Agoult would probably not have been stopped at Varennes. All this seemed definitely settled, when lo! in the King's last communication to the Marquis de Bouillé, dated the 15th of June, he acquainted him that the day of departure was changed from the 19th to the 20th, adding,

'That he could not bring with him in his carriage M. d'Agoult because Madame de Tourzel, Governess of the children of France, must accompany them; she insisted on the right of her office never to be separated from the children, and this consideration had determined the King.'—*Mem.* 234.

Now, we will at once confess that we do not believe that any such ridiculous etiquette could have been allowed to prevail under such circumstances; and that it was only a pretext used to soften to M. de Bouillé the rejection of his advice, which must, we are

satisfied, have had some other and more serious motive. It could certainly not have arisen, as is generally said, from any competition between M. d'Agoult and Madame de Tourzel for a seat in the carriage; for when the Marquis de Bouillé proposed M. d'Agoult, he distinctly *specified* that he would 'make a *seventh in* the coach,' including therefore Madame de Tourzel, or *some other*, besides the five royal persons *and* M. d'Agoult. It was even doubtful whether Madame de Tourzel's state of health would admit of her undertaking such a journey, and the Queen proposed that she should not. It is therefore clear that the Queen – the weightiest opinion, it may be presumed, on such a point—was no party to this plea of etiquette: and as to the actual space in the carriage, it was proved on the return from Varennes that it could receive, in addition to the royal party, two of the commissaries of the Convention, Barnave and Petion.*

But even supposing that the etiquette was so insurmountable, we may ask why should M. d'Agoult, or whoever was to be the managing person, have been *in* the coach at all? There might be reasons why his being for so long a journey confined to the same carriage with the ladies and children would have been inconvenient; but surely his proper place would have been that destined for and occupied by one of the attendants — the seat in front of it. So that the real and only question was between M. d'Agoult and — *not* Madame de Tourzel, but — one of the three gardes-du-corps. Nor should it be forgotten that the presence of Madame de Tourzel or some other *lady* was likely to be as necessary *within* the carriage as M. d'Agoult's *outside*. She was to act the part of the Baroness de Korff—she would have to speak to the people at the post-houses—in short, to take a prominent part as the mistress of all, which it would have endangered the incognito of the Queen and embarrassed the inexperience of Madame Elizabeth to have done. The *ostensible* woman was therefore as necessary as the *active* man; and there seems reason to think that when the Queen proposed to Madame de Tourzel to stay

* The following anecdote is worth citing, as illustrative of this point:—After the 10th of August, when the whole royal family were put into one ordinary coach to be conveyed to the Temple, and that Petion, as mayor of Paris, was about to get in also, some one said they were too many; on which his Majesty said, with a look of good humour (surely ill-timed and misplaced), '*Not at all; M. Petion knows that I can support a much longer journey with a great many in the carriage.*'—*Moore's Journal*, i. 102.

behind, on account of her weak state of health, she had some other lady in her eye, and that the question of *etiquette*—if, in order to support the King's strict veracity, we must imagine one—was that Madame de Tourzel insisted on her right in preference to any other *lady*. From all this we are forced to conclude that the King did not wish for M. d'Agoult's company, either from a pique of *amour propre* that made him jealous of appearing in leading-strings, or from some other such motive: but we must add one extraordinary fact stated directly by the Archbishop, and inferentially by both MM. de Choiseul and Bouillé, that M. d'Agoult was not in the secret, nor aware of the intended journey, nor of his having been himself ever thought of for it. He was asked (as he had often been before for occasional services) to select the gardes-du-corps, but he was not told for what duty, but only that they were to be trustworthy, and robust enough to ride with dispatches to Vienna.

The employment of the Gardes-du-corps was itself another mistake, which M. de Choiseul says that both he and M. de Fersen deplored. The utter inexperience of the gentlemen selected in the office of couriers and postilions was — notwithstanding their zeal and fidelity — one of the many unfortunate circumstances, the combination of which defeated the enterprise: had they had the habits and experience of couriers, they might have prevented the difficulty which occurred at Varennes; while, on the contrary, their ignorance of the duties of their apparent station excited suspicion in more places than one, and particularly at Ste. Ménéhoud, the stage before Varennes, where the royal fugitives were first recognised and narrowly escaped arrest.

It had been arranged that one of them was to precede the King's carriage on horseback to have the relays ready; a second, also on horseback, was to attend the carriage; the third was to sit on the seat in front of it. There is no mention of any alternation of duty amongst these gentlemen; and on the contrary, it appears certain that M. de Valory (37 years old) rode, as avant-courier, the whole distance of 150 miles in twenty-three hours without intermission. If this be so, we can hardly be surprised that he was somewhat confused and bewildered in the unexpected difficulty in which we shall, by-and-by, see him at Varennes.

Before we proceed with the details of this eventful journey, we think that the following preliminary view of the order and dis-

tances of the principal stages may render the narrative clearer:

Relays.	Fr. postes.	Eng. miles.	Officers commanding escorts.
Bondy	1½	7	—
Claye	2	10	—
Meaux	2	10	—
Montmirail	7	35	—
Châlons sur Marne	7¾	39	—
Pont Somme-Velle	2½	11	Sub-Lieut. Boudet. Duke de Choiseul. M. de Goguelat.
Ste. Ménéhoud	3	15	Marquis d'Andoins.
Clermont	2	10	Count Ch. de Damas.
Varennes	[4 lieues]	10	Lt. Rodwell or Rohrig.* Le Chev. de Bouillé. Count de Raigecourt.

The details of the departure will be best given in the words of Madame Royale's own notes, made soon after their return to Paris, and subsequently confided to Mr. Weber, her mother's foster-brother, who, after escaping the massacres both of the 10th of August and the 2nd of September, reached England in the latter end of 1792. The narrative itself is very characteristic; it is marked by the simplicity and naïveté of the age and sex of the young and inexperienced traveller. She tells what happened under her own eyes, but she neither indulges in conjectures on the causes of the events, nor in regrets at their consequences; and her narrative is in truth the only one that we believe to be entirely correct.

At half past 10 o'clock at night of Monday the 20th of June 1791, writes the Princess—

'My brother was wakened by my mother, and Madame de Tourzel brought him down to my mother's apartment, where I also

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* We suspect that these two names belong to the same officer. We find at least that the young man who commanded the post at Varennes is called *Rohrig* by both the MM. de Bouillé and M. de Valory; *Rodwell* by Goguelat; *Rodcall* by the Archbishop, *Rorrük* by de Moustier, and *Rottwell* by the Duke de Choiseul. We adopt M. de Bouillé's orthography; and it is but justice to add that if the *Rohrig* of MM. de Bouillé and the *Rodwell* of Goguelat be the same person, he was not guilty, as was subsequently stated, of having *run away* from his post under pretence of carrying the news of the arrest to M. de Bouillé, for Goguelat admits that he sent *Rodwell* on that errand, though he complains just after that he found the hussars without an officer. But all the affair is full of absolutely contradictory details; even the *distances* are variously given, and the *times* hardly ever *exactly* coincide.

came: there we found one of the gardes-du-corps, called Monsieur de Malden, who was to assist our departure. My mother came in and out several times to see us. They dressed my brother as a little girl: he looked beautiful, but he was so sleepy that he could not stand, and did not know what we were all about. I asked him what he thought we were going to do; he answered, "I suppose to act a play, since we have all got these odd dresses."

'At half-past ten, when we were all ready, *my mother herself conducted us to the carriage in the middle of the court; which was exposing herself to great risk.*'

Here on the very threshold we meet one of those contradictions to which we before alluded. It would be strange that Madame should be mistaken in so remarkable a fact, and one in every way so transcendently interesting to her, yet the Archbishop, the Duke of Choiseul, and the two gardes-du-corps, the latter eye-witnesses and assistants, all assert, and some of them with minute corroborative details, that the Queen did *not* conduct the children to the carriage. There could be no hesitation in preferring the testimony of Madame to all the rest, but that it seems contradicted by that of *the Queen herself*, who on her trial stated '*that her children, under the care of Madame de Tourzel, left the château an hour before her, and waited for her on the Little Carrousel.*'*

This discrepancy, however, is only apparent, and is perfectly explained by the fact, correctly stated by M. de Bouillé, and by him alone, that the job-coach driven by Count Fersen was *at first* stationed in the *Cour des Princes*, near the glass door through which all the family escaped; *that* was the '*Court*' which Madame meant, and so far the Queen certainly accompanied the children, though she did not herself leave the palace for an hour later; by which time the carriage was stationed in the Little Carrousel at the northern end of the Tuileries. Madame continues:—

'Madame de Tourzel, my brother, and I, got into the carriage; M. de Fersen was the coachman. To deceive any one that might follow us, we drove about several streets; at last we returned to the Little Carrousel, which is close to the Tuileries. My brother was fast asleep in the bottom of the carriage, under the petticoats of Madame de Tourzel. We saw M. de Lafayette go by, who had been at my father's *coucher*.'

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* See again the prefixed plan for all these details.

Lafayette's carriage drove through the Cour Royale into the Carrousel as the Queen was crossing it; it passed so near her, says *one* account, that, by an impulse for which she could not account, she made an effort to touch it *with a switch which she carried in her hand.** Its very lights, says *another* account, so alarmed her, that she fled to a considerable distance to avoid them.

To one who examines all these accounts critically, this affair of Lafayette's carriage offers at first sight a great deal of confusion and contradiction. One set of witnesses describe the carriage as 'coming to;' another, with Madame Royale, as 'going from,' the *coucher*. The fact is that the coming and going were nearly simultaneous; Lafayette meant to have been at the *coucher*—something delayed him; the King, on the other hand, was in haste to get rid of his attendants, and had retired before Lafayette arrived, who drove away immediately. What a critical conjuncture, and how likely to create the strong apprehension which the Queen felt at seeing their chief jailor at such a moment!

'At last, after waiting a long hour, I observed a woman loitering about the carriage. I was afraid that we should be discovered; but I was made easy by seeing our coachman open the carriage-door, and that the woman was my aunt; she had escaped alone with one of her attendants. In stepping into the carriage, she trod on my brother, who was lying in the bottom of it, and he had the courage not to cry out.

'My aunt told us that all was quiet, and that my father and mother would be with us presently. My father, indeed, arrived very soon after, and then my mother, with one of the gardes-du-corps, who was to accompany us.'—pp. 9-13.

All this statement is perfectly exact, and it is the only one that is so. The discrepancies between all the others, though of little or no importance as to the result, are so curiously inexplicable as to be worth notice. The Archbishop says that Madame Elizabeth, accompanied by one of the gardes-du-corps, went out *first*, with the children; and he relates a conversation between her and Madame Royale as they were crossing the courts together. It is, however, all erroneous, and we have evidence *aliundè*

* If there is any colour for this strange anecdote it must have been that the Queen had provided herself with a parasol.

that Madame Royale was right on every point. M. de Valory also misstates the order and circumstances of the exits—thus—first, the children, with no garde-du-corps; next, the Queen, with M. de Moustier; then Madame Elizabeth, with M. de Malden; and last, the King, closely followed by de Valory himself. He also places the rendezvous on the *Great* instead of the *Little* Carrousel, at the corner of the Rue *St. Nicaise*, instead of the Rue *de l'Echelle*. Now all this, though related by an eye-witness, and one who, as he tells us, brought up the rear of the march, is wrong in every particular except, perhaps, the last. We say *perhaps*, because it seems impossible that he could be mistaken as to his own attendance on the King, and especially as he states that in crossing the *Cour Royale* he picked up his Majesty's shoebuckle which he had dropped. Yet this, as well as all the other particulars, is contradicted by M. de Moustier, whose statement (which several small circumstances seem to corroborate) is, first, that *he* did not conduct the Queen, nor M. de Valory the King; next, that M. de Malden performed that duty for all, crossing the courts twice or thrice for that purpose; and lastly, that neither de Moustier nor de Valory could have had any share in the actual exit, as they did not even see it, both having left the palace before any of the royal family. When the hour of departure approached, 'M. de Moustier' (his narrative is in the third person)

'left the royal apartments by going, by order, down the great stairs of the palace, and was directed to meet M. de Valory [who was to go out by another way] under the arch that opened from the Carrousel on the quay near the Pont Royal. These two gardes-du-corps were furnished with a pass word to make themselves known to M. de Fersen, whom they found waiting for them leaning on the parapet of the quay next the bridge. As soon as they had effected their junction, they [all three] threw themselves into a hackney coach, and were driven to Count Fersen's hotel, where M. de Valory mounted a horse that was ready to take him to Bondy.'—*Relation*, pp. 6, 7.

How is it possible to reconcile this with M. de Valory's statement? and which is to be believed? We incline to adopt M. de Moustier's, because it is more consistent with Madame's, as well as with the probabilities of the case; for M. de Valory's does not explain how he and M. de Moustier were to get from the Carrousel to the Porte St. Martin, nor where they found their

saddle-horses. M. de Moustier's statements explain all these and some other details, which would else be very puzzling: —

'At M. de Fersen's house, M. de Moustier found also a postilion and four horses, with which he went to *another hotel*, where the horses were put to the travelling carriage, with which they then proceeded to the Porte St. Martin—M. de Fersen hastening back to the Carrousel with a job carriage which he had ready, driving it himself, and in which he received and united the whole royal family. M. de Malden had been retained in the palace to conduct the King, Queen, the Dauphin, the two Princesses, and Madame de Tourzel, which he did in three turns. He then got up behind the job-coach, which M. de Fersen drove to the Porte St. Martin.'—*Ib.*

But now comes the most incredible circumstance of the whole story. The Archbishop states, 'that all went well as far as the great gate of the Cour Royale, but at that spot the Queen *met* the carriage of M. de Lafayette with his usual accompaniments of guards and torches. After escaping this danger, she told the garde-du-corps, on whom she was leaning, to conduct her to the Little Carrousel, corner of the Rue de l'Echelle, that is about two hundred paces from where she stood; her guide knew, it seems, less of the topography of Paris than she herself did, and it was too dangerous to ask their way in that neighbourhood; they turned to the right instead of the left as they should have done, and, passing under the arcade of the gallery, crossed the Pont Royal, and finding themselves bewildered along the quays and streets at the other side of the water, they were obliged at last to ask their way. A sentinel on the bridge directed them, and they were obliged to return the way they came, and pass along the front of the Tuileries to the Rue de l'Echelle.'

Such is the account supposed to be derived from the Queen herself, but it seems incredible that she, and still more that the garde-du-corps, should not have known the Little Carrousel, which was close under the windows of the palace, and not above two hundred yards from the Great Carrousel, on which they were standing. It is still less probable that they should have turned *to* the right by mistake, for they had just come *from* that side. But it seems nearly impossible that under any delusion they should pass through the wicket and under the arcade of the Gallery of the Louvre, and across the quay, and over the bridge, and finally lose their way on the other side of the river! But we need not

waste time in reasoning this point, when we have it in evidence that the garde-du-corps who accompanied the Queen — M. de Malden—had already conducted two parties to the carriage. He has not, that we know of, published any account of the affair; but there cannot be any doubt that it was he who had, after having attended the children as Madame Royale states, returned to escort probably the King and certainly the Queen. We therefore cannot but conclude that the Archbishop's statement, if not a total mistake, must be a violent exaggeration both as to the distance and the delay of this aberration, and that the Queen, in fact, as Madame Royale implies, and as M. de Choiseul asserts, was but a few minutes after the King. Her maternal affection had led her to run the risk of the first exit to see her children safe. Her duty to her husband and her doubts of his active resolution may, perhaps, have induced her to remain to the last, and, as it were, not *leave the ship* till every one else had escaped.

'We then proceeded' (writes Madame), 'and reached the barrier without any event: there a travelling-carriage had been prepared for us; but M. de Fersen did not know where it was, so that we were obliged to wait a long while, and my father even got out to look for it, which alarmed us very much: at last M. de Fersen found the other carriage, and we got into it. M. de Fersen took leave of my father, and made his escape.'—pp. 27-8.

This additional cause of delay is not mentioned in any other account; but it is stated in some that M. de Fersen himself was so ignorant of the streets of Paris as not to know the direct way from the Tuileries to the Porte St. Martin; and that he lost half an hour by taking the circuitous route of the Rue St. Honoré and the Boulevard de la Madeleine, a *détour* and loss of time that gave the King some uneasiness. It may be true that the King did not understand why M. de Fersen did not drive straight to the Porte St. Martin; but we now know that the Count made no mistake; he showed here, as he did all along, equal activity and prudence.

The berline had been placed, as mentioned by M. de Moustier, at a friend's house * in the Rue de Clichy, and M. de Fersen

* The house was that of Mr. Quintin Craufurd, an English gentleman well known in the fashionable and literary world, and was inhabited by a lady at this time called Madame Sullivan, but afterwards acknowledged and known as Mrs. Craufurd, with whom M. de Fersen was very intimate, and who assisted him in some of the details preparatory to the journey. She also thought it prudent to escape to Brussels.

had arranged, as we have seen, that M. de Moustier and his own coachman should take the horses to bring it away at eleven o'clock to an appointed rendezvous outside the Porte St. Martin; but, as he was not able to see this transport effected, he thought it safest to assure himself that the carriage had gone to its destination, and he therefore resolved to pass that way to satisfy himself of a fact on which all depended; he therefore proceeded from the Rue de l'Echelle—not, as some accounts say, by going all round by the Boulevard de la Madeleine, but—by the *Rue Sainte Anne*, the direct line to the Rue de Clichy, and, having *there* satisfied himself that the travelling carriage was gone forward, he followed it to the rendezvous. Having, after some short delay, found and placed the royal family in the travelling coach, he had to get rid of the job-coach, of which he had been the driver; he drove it a little way off, and overturned it and the horses into a ditch, where he left them. In following all these transactions the reader must bear in mind that M. de Fersen was managing all this variety of affairs *single-handed* and without help or assistance—that he did not venture to employ even any of his own servants, but the one, (a Swede who could speak no French,) who was necessarily employed to bring the coach to the Porte St. Martin, and to be postilion from that to the first relay, to which M. de Fersen himself was still to be coachman.

Madame Royale says that M. de Fersen took leave of the King at the Porte St. Martin; other accounts say there was an affecting scene between them at Bondy. Again, we rather believe Madame, as we think that M. de Fersen would prefer taking leave of the King at the Porte St. Martin, where there were no witnesses, rather than have to do so at the public post-house, where any familiarity might have occasioned suspicion. However that may have been, as soon as he had disposed of the job-coach, he mounted the seat of the berline, and proceeded '*grand train*' to Bondy, the first post stage of the great road. Having seen the royal family off, he got into a carriage which he had waiting for him, and crossed over to the great high road to Brussels, by which he escaped out of France the same day.*

* There are several unaccountable discrepancies and even contradictions, as to this first stage of the journey and M. de Fersen's departure, between the Archbishop's account and those of MM. de Bouillé, Choiseul, and de Valory. One says he returned to Paris in his own *carriage* and *four* horses, and

We cannot take leave of Count de Fersen without adding a few words of admiration for his character and compassion for his fate. His connexion with France was, as we have said, his having the command of the regiment of Royal-Suédois in the French service, which led him into the King's and Queen's society and confidence, which latter he justified by his prudence, courage, and gratitude in their adversity, though it served as a pretext for the use of his name in the absurd and detestable calumny exposed in the last Essay (p. 93). The Duc de Levis, in his 'Souvenirs,' expresses a generous envy that a *foreigner* was employed on this interesting occasion; and a foreigner, too, 'who had more judgment than wit; who was cautious with men, reserved towards women; serious, but not sad: whose air and figure were those of a hero of romance, but not of a French romance, for he was not sufficiently light and brilliant.' With submission to M. de Levis, it seems to us that M. de Fersen's character, and particularly for such an occasion as this, did not require and would not have been improved by those lighter qualities which M. de Levis desiderates. M. de Fersen's fate was most extraordinary: having escaped the vengeance of the French Revolutionists, he was murdered in Stockholm, in 1810, at the funeral of the Prince Royal, Charles Augustus, with circumstances of ferocity and cruelty on the part of the mob, and of apathy or cowardice on the part of the magistrates, quite worthy of the capital of France. The pretence of this murder was, that Fersen (who as grand marshal of the kingdom was leading the funeral) had been accessary to the death of the Prince, whose death was probably natural, and with which M. de Fersen, at least, could have had nothing to do. He was dragged from a guard-house, where he had taken refuge at the beginning of the tumult, and before the eyes of the troops and magistrates, who did not make the slightest effort to save him, *beaten to death* with *umbrellas;* and this happened on the 20th of June, the very anniversary of his rescue of the King of France! The body was afterwards most indecently maltreated, *à la mode de Paris.*

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blames it as an indiscretion; another states that he made his retreat in a *cabriolet* with *two* horses; and a third that he mounted a *bidet de poste* and galloped across the country to the first stage on the great Brussels road, where he had a travelling carriage waiting, in which he escaped that evening out of France. Two or three of the accounts say that he drove the berline to the second *poste* at Claye. These are curious as instances of the fallibility of evidence, but of no importance as to the result.

After receiving at Bondy the additional incumbrance of another carriage with two women attached to the royal children, who had been for four or five hours waiting there (most perilously for the success of the expedition), the party proceeded; the three *gardes-du-corps* now accompanying them as travelling-servants—M. de Valory as avant-courier to order the relays of horses, de Malden on horseback behind, and de Moustier seated on the front of the carriage.

No difficulties occurred as far as Châlons-sur-Marne (about 100 miles), where the arrangements of the Queen and M. de Fersen ended, and where the responsibility of MM. de Bouillé and Choiseul and their troops began; and thenceforward everything went wrong. The travellers passed through Châlons at 4 P.M.; but on their arrival about 6 at the next stage, Pont de Somme-Velle, where they expected to meet their first escort, with MM. de Choiseul and Goguelat as protectors and guides, they found nobody. This disappointment alarmed the King, as if with a presentiment of all the misfortunes that followed it; and we gather from Madame Royale that, though there was no difficulty about the relay, some time was lost in waiting for the expected arrival of M. de Choiseul, who had in fact but just departed, despairing so entirely of the King's coming as not even to have left a vidette behind to account for his absence.

At first the failure at Somme-Velle attracted little notice, as the King had passed that stage, if not without delay, at least without interruption; but when the whole train of circumstances came to be considered, it was found to be of the deepest importance, and a sharp controversy as to the degree in which it influenced the catastrophe arose between MM. de Bouillé, father and son, who were responsible for the general arrangement, and the Duke de Choiseul, who had the particular command and charge of the post of Somme-Velle. This controversy, which commenced in 1800, in a private correspondence between the Marquis de Bouillé and the Duke, blazed out after the Restoration into the publications of the dozen narratives which we mentioned at the outset, and which—confused and inconsistent, and often erroneous, as their evidence is—lead we think to a clear and indisputable conclusion that M. de Choiseul's conduct was in the highest degree indiscreet and unfortunate, and that his defence of it is not merely insufficient, but liable to still graver criticism.

It would be too much to say that this failure at Somme-Velle was the sole (though no doubt the most immediate) cause of the final catastrophe, because the King got safely through that and two further stages, and was at last arrested under circumstances with which the failure at Somme-Velle had no *direct* connexion; and it must also be admitted that there were several other circumstances which *might* have produced the same result even if that failure had not occurred. These circumstances were the same which had driven the King to make this attempt at escape—the contempt and odium into which the old monarchy had fallen—the jealous and tumultuous excitement of the population of all the towns and of a great portion of the country, and the busy and bad spirit of the new authorities which had suddenly sprung up all over the kingdom in the shape of mayors, municipalities, clubs, and national guards; and which had spread so generally into the army itself, that when the King proposed that his relays should be guarded by detachments of troops, M. de Bouillé (who had had recent and deplorable, though to him honourable, experience in the insurrection of Nancy, Metz, &c., of the temper of both the troops and the people of the towns) had represented its dangers; but the King persisting, and M. de Bouillé, having a few cavalry regiments which he thought he could rely on, submitted—unfortunately!—for if no military precautions had been taken, it seems almost certain that the last stages of the journey might have been as quietly accomplished as the first had been.

But the results of the military intervention fully realised M. de Bouillé's apprehension. Wherever the detachments of troops appeared—small as was their number, inoffensive as was their deportment, short as was their stay, and plausible as was their professed object—that of escorting money for the pay of the army—they everywhere, by one untoward accident or another, and in some cases, without any apparent cause, became objects of distrust to the people and the municipalities, before there was or could be the least suspicion that these movements had any relation whatever to the King; and a few hours sufficed to debauch the troops themselves into mutiny.

There was a small garrison of about a hundred hussars in barracks at Varennes, where, in consequence of the general arrangements, M. de Goguelat arrived early in the morning of the 20th, and selected forty men whom, with their com-

manding officer, Lieut. Boudet, he was to conduct to Somme-Velle, leaving the remaining sixty hussars under the command of a very young and inexperienced sub-lieutenant, M. Rohrig.* He (Goguelat) proceeded that afternoon to Ste. Ménéhoud, where, however, he had the indiscretion to give offence, by not, as was the usual etiquette, sounding his trumpet on entering the town, and by omitting also the necessary form of reporting his arrival to the magistrates. He also had the ill luck to get into a violent squabble with the postmaster, the too celebrated Drouet, by sending back to Varennes his own carriage by horses hired at a cheaper rate from an individual instead of those of the public poste. This made a violent scene—almost a riot, and the whole temper of the place was so disturbed that the national guard was called out, and, for the first time, *armed* to resist the fancied aggression of the troops; and though the affair was quieted that evening, it was not without difficulty that M. de Goguelat and his party were allowed next morning to continue their march, and they reached Somme-Velle about noon of the 21st; M. de Choiseul having arrived from Paris about an hour before. The scenes at Ste. Ménéhoud had no connexion whatever with the King or his journey, for they occurred several hours before he had quitted the Tuileries.

This unlucky detachment, however, was doomed to find itself equally unpopular at Somme-Velle. M. de Choiseul states that, 'by accident and fatality,' it happened that the tenants of a large estate in the neighbourhood had lately refused to pay certain rates, and had been threatened with a military enforcement of them, and seeing the hussars arrive at this small village without any visible object, they fancied that they must be come to enforce the payment of the rates. This created a growing excitement which extended, as M. de Choiseul asserts, even to Châlons, the municipality of which affected, he says, to take umbrage at the position of the hussars as if they were about to attack the town, and sent out their own gendarmerie to reconnoitre the hussars and force them to remove. This state of things lasted, according to M. de Choiseul, 'till half-past five o'clock—the King's arrival had been calculated for three—so that there was already incurred a delay of two hours and a half.'

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* M. de Goguelat calls him *Rodwell*. See note, *ante*, p. 120.

He further tells us that, finding the crowd at Somme-Velle increasing in number and violence, and hearing that matters were equally bad at Châlons, he now thought that even if the King were to arrive, such a state of things would prevent his getting past Somme-Velle, and probably even occasion his arrest in Châlons; and as the presence of the hussars was the sole cause of the disturbance, he thought that he would best secure the great object—namely, the safe passage of the King—by retreating, which he did at, as he says, *a quarter to six*, on the pretence, thrown out as if accidentally, in the hearing of the mob, that he supposed that the treasure he was watching for must have passed before his arrival. This excuse, and the retreat of the troops, quieted, he says, all agitation both in the neighbourhood and *at Châlons*.

We need not stop to inquire whether there must not have been some exaggeration in M. de Choiseul's apprehensions from this mob, of which the royal travellers, who it is admitted were not more than half a hour behind the date that M. de Choiseul assigns to his own departure, saw no vestiges, as we can show from his own evidence that his *date* is indisputably erroneous, and that he had abandoned his post at a much earlier hour, and under circumstances essentially different from the foregoing statement. In the first place, Madame Royale, always the safest guide, states that they passed through Châlons at four P.M., which, as Somme-Velle is but two and a quarter *postes*, or about eleven English miles, would bring them thither at half-past five, which is the hour stated by M. de Bouillé, and confirmed by a comparison of the collateral dates and distances; and neither at Châlons at four, nor at Somme-Velle at half-past five, were any disturbances observed. How then could M. de Choiseul pretend that he was still at Somme-Velle at a *quarter to six*, and pressed upon by a crowd, the increasing numbers and violence of which determined his retreat?

It is further to be observed that in his private correspondence with the Marquis de Bouillé, in 1800, he did not allege this disturbance at Somme-Velle as a justification—nay, he did not so much as mention it. If he had, M. de Bouillé would no doubt have answered him, that it was in the contemplation of some such danger that he was brought there at all—that his instructions expressly provided for some commotion at Châlons; and that, above all, in proportion as the danger of maintaining his post grew more serious, it was the more his duty to have taken some steps to communicate with the King, or

at least with the detachments behind him, and eventually with the General himself—not one of which precautions was attempted. In short, it seems to us impossible to reconcile M. de Choiseul's character for courage and fidelity with the details of his retreat on any other supposition than that he had given up all expectation that the King was on the road. That this was his chief and probably only reason—certainly the only reason that he assigned at the time or for twenty years later—we shall establish by and by from his own evidence; but we shall first show that the grounds on which it rested were altogether inadequate. The only grounds were the delay of his Majesty's appearance at Somme-Velle. Now we must say that the delay was by no means such as to justify the desperate resolution of M. de Choiseul to throw up the game. Somme-Velle is 23½ postes from Paris; and the King, in spite of accidents (which moreover should have been allowed for), arrived there within seventeen hours—by no means bad travelling. M. de Choiseul himself had that very morning taken seven hours, 3 A.M. to 10 (*Rel.*, p. 73) to come ten *postes*—Montmirail to Somme-Velle, in his own very light ('très léger') cabriolet.

But apart from calculation and conjecture, M. de Choiseul had a measure to go by, provided by himself, and which, if adhered to, would have prevented so hasty a departure.

'It was,' he says, 'settled between me and M. de Fersen, that if the King should not have arrived at Bondy by *halfpast three in the morning*, it would prove that the scheme was interrupted, and in that case the said first courier should proceed forward to Somme-Velle to apprise me, and that I should *then* retreat, and carry back with me all the detachments.'—*Relation*, p. 52.

Now as this courier had *not* arrived, M. de Choiseul, according to his own showing, ought to have concluded that the *scheme was not interrupted*, and that he should therefore not have withdrawn the detachments, which he was to have done only if it had been.

But this was not all: not content with abandoning his own post, he, at four o'clock, despatched his cabriolet with post-horses down the road with the following laconic but significant note to the commanders of the stations at Ste. Ménéhoud, with verbal messages of the same purport to Clermont and Varennes.

'*There is no likelihood that the treasure will arrive to-day. I go* (*je*

pars) *to rejoin M. de Bouillé. You will receive fresh orders to-morrow.*'—*L. de B.* p. 96.

This note, we see, is a decisive contradiction of both the date and the motive which M. de Choiseul afterwards thought fit to assign to his retreat from Somme-Velle, and it is also very different from the colour which he afterwards gave to it in his '*Relation*' when he knew that the *fact* of some such communication was known to M. de Bouillé, though he seems not to have been aware that the original paper was in existence, and may have doubted if it could be produced.

'Four o'clock was striking [at Somme-Velle] but no courier—no news of the King, and the crowd about us was becoming still more impatient; but I still persisted in remaining. I only resolved to send forward my own cabriolet to Stenay—charging Léonard [one of the Queen's servants who was travelling in it] to tell *en passant* MM. de Damas [at Clermont], Jules de Bouillé [at Varennes], and the General [at Stenay], of my position, and *attente*:* I also gave him a note of four lines for M. d'Andoins† at Ste. Menehoud, in which I spoke of my *fears* at so extraordinary a delay, and of the necessity in which I *might perhaps* be of *removing* my detachment, the presence of which was *disturbing the public tranquillity*.'—*Relation*, 82.

It will be seen that this is a very incorrect, and we must say disingenuous version of the note, which talks of neither '*attente*,' nor '*craintes*,' nor '*peut-êtres*,' nor future movements to restore '*public tranquillity*,' but categorically that he had given the King up, and was *already—at four o'clock—on the march* backwards to rejoin head-quarters. How he could subsequently assert, that he did not commence his retreat till a quarter before six, it is not for us to explain!

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* In a point affecting personal character, precision is so desirable that I leave the original word, observing that it is somewhat ambiguous, and might mean either an *apprehension* that he might be obliged to go, or an *expectation* that he might still be able to *wait*—*attendre*; but it is clear that in neither sense is it warranted by the words of the note, which are positive—'*je pars*.'

† Here is another difficulty of little consequence, except as to what is certainly of some—M. de Choiseul's accuracy. He says that he wrote but *one* note, which was to M. d'Andoins at Ste. Ménéhoud; but we know from M. Ch. de Damas that the note, or at least one to the same effect, was sent to *himself* at Clermont.

M. L. de Bouillé also states, on the authority of M. de Moustier, that the Duke had received *at Bondy in the night a note from the King to announce that he was at the Porte St. Martin*. This, if true, would leave us no alternative but to believe that M. de Choiseul had lost his senses; but it is, we are satisfied, a mistake, arising from a misconstruction of an ambiguous expression of M. de Moustier's.

But from whatever motive, or combination of motives, he was induced to take that step, in face of the *very difficulty* that he was sent to overcome, we cannot reconcile with the most ordinary common sense the mode in which he conducted it. Conceding that in the circumstances of disturbance that he describes at Somme-Velle, his retreat was justifiable, and admitting further that it may have facilitated, and certainly did not impede, the King's passage, yet we cannot either account for or excuse his subsequent measures, which, *and not the retreat itself*, were the direct causes of the subsequent misfortune. He seems never to have thought of the most obvious of all duties in such a case—the leaving behind him, as near as possible to the post he was abandoning, some one to apprise the King—if he by any chance should arrive—of his movements. If he could not venture to stay in person, he had with him M. de Goguelat, who was placed under his orders as a *spare hand* to meet such emergencies; and if he could not employ him or some other of his military subordinates, he had a cabriolet and two servants, one of his own and one of the Queen's at his disposal: he had also another officer of hussars (but it seems in plain clothes), M. Aubriot—a *protégé* of his own, whom he had ordered to be at Somme-Velle four days before with two spare horses, and whom he did actually employ when he resolved to retreat, in going to an adjoining village to look for a guide to lead them across the country to Varennes. Surely with such ample means, civil and military, and finding that his promise to retreat had so tranquillizing an effect, some plausible excuse might have been found for his own, or Goguelat's, or Aubriot's, or somebody's, or anybody's, either lingering on the road forward, or pushing back to Châlons, or in some way obtaining a chance of communicating to the travellers the all important fact—WHERE *Goguelat had placed the relay at Varennes*, which, as there was no post-house there, the travellers had no means of knowing but through Goguelat.

But if from any special difficulties he was prevented from this precaution, why at least did he not retreat so leisurely as to give the King a chance of overtaking him? He himself evidently anticipated the pressure of this question, for we find that the Archbishop (who, we repeat, must have written this part of his narrative from M. de Choiseul's information) says that he retreated *au pas*, and as slowly as possible. But then, how was it that the

King, who, *according to the Duke's account*, was but a few minutes behind him, did not overtake him?—the answer is, as we have already shown, that his date was an error—that he had really started at least an hour sooner than he states—that he probably did *not* go leisurely—that he certainly made no stoppages, which he might easily have found excuses for doing, by the way—and instead of keeping the high road and falling back on the next detachment, he left the road as soon as he could—attempted to get back across a country that he knew nothing about—lost his way—got bewildered in woods and marshes—and exhausted both his men and horses, while the King passed rapidly along the high road to be arrested at Varennes for want of knowing, what he or Goguelat only could tell, *where* the relay at that stage had been placed. Whatever may be thought of the expediency of his retreat, or the prudence of avoiding the towns—points that we are not much disposed to contest—we cannot conceive how he should not have endeavoured to leave some communication for the travellers, and that he and M. de Goguelat, whose more especial duty it was, did not recollect the imperious necessity of acquainting them where the relay at Varennes was to be found. All other mischances, difficulties, delays, and dangers were fortunately overcome; that single item was all that was wanting to the complete success of the enterprise, and we are therefore not surprised at learning from Madame Campan that the Queen attributed the failure to M. de Goguelat. Goguelat, in his published defence, shelters himself under the fact of his having been under the orders of the Duke of Choiseul. That is true, but not quite a defence for him; for, though he came under the Duke's orders at Somme-Velle, he it was who was charged with all the preceding arrangements, about which the Duke could only know what Goguelat told him, and M. Aubriot states that it was Goguelat who, in his alarm at the events of the day before at Ste. Ménéhoud, had suggested to M. de Choiseul the hasty retreat across the country, and who certainly was in the first degree responsible for letting the King know where he had placed the relay. In fine, there can be no doubt that this inconceivable negligence was the direct and effective cause of the misfortune—but for the insufficient and disingenuous excuses made for it M. de Choiseul is individually responsible.

Here we conclude the episode of Somme-Velle—and without questioning the Duke de Choiseul's courage or his fidelity, to

which his contemporaries, and even his adversaries bear full testimony, we cannot but think that, instead of the arrogant *éloge* on himself, which he published at an interval of thirty years, it would have better become him and the real state of the case, if he had sung his '*Confiteor—meâ culpâ—meâ maximâ culpâ!*'

The travellers lost some time at Somme-Velle, in expectation of hearing something about M. de Choiseul—but it could not have been much; as they arrived at Ste. Ménéhoud about half-past seven. But here again there was an unfortunate delay pregnant with mischief—the courier, de Valory, did not know where the post-house was situated, and had excited surprise and suspicion by inquiring for it. He had not even found it when the carriages arrived—the horses of course were not ready—the disturbance excited the day before, by M. de Goguelat and his detachment, was not allayed, but indeed rather increased by the arrival of the special escort under Capt. the Marquis d'Andoins.

This gentleman had the indiscretion to try to enter into conversation with de Valory, and, what was worse, to go to the carriage-door, and explain at some length to the King his own awkward position in that town. The King, already uneasy under the unexplained disappointment at Somme-Velle, and further disturbed by d'Andoins' report, became impatient of the delay in changing horses, and looked out of the window and spoke in a tone that attracted the notice of the son of the postmaster, who, having been lately at Paris where he had seen the King, and having that very morning received some assignats on which the King's head was very well engraved, guessed who he was. This man, whose humble name of DROUET is destined to accompany that of *Louis the Unfortunate* to the latest posterity, did not at first venture to detain the King, but on afterthought, when the carriages must have already gained a considerable advance, he communicated his suspicions to the Municipality, and by their order he and a fellow-townsman of the name of Guilleaume, set off in the hope of arresting the travellers at the next stage, Clermont. But he was too late. The horses were changed quickly. Count Charles de Damas, a gentleman of family and high character, well known to their Majesties, who commanded the troops, though puzzled and alarmed at M. de Choiseul's note (for it was to *him* that it was addressed), could not altogether believe in it—it was clear that M. de Choiseul

himself was coming away, but M. de Damas did not understand how the detachment could have moved without having fallen back upon him, and in a lingering hope that M. de Choiseul had been under some mistake, and as the day was closing in, he still remained outside the town on the Paris road, and about nine o'clock met M. de Valory.. M. de Damas warned him that there was some uneasiness in the town about the troops, which he had therefore shut up in their quarters, and urged him to lose no time in hastening forward to get ready the relay at Clermont. M. de Valory pressed forward, ordered the relay, and set off immediately, even before the King had entered the town. While the horses were changing (which was done in ten minutes), M. de Damas, with several of his officers, were standing at the door of the post-house as idle spectators. The royal party recognised him. The *Baronness de Korff* beckoned him up to the carriage-door, he said a few words to her—the King began to speak to him—the Queen, more prudent, made a sign to him to be cautious, and M. de Damas retired, delighted to think that the royal party was now safe. But his own position became worse; and when he, after a reasonable interval, endeavoured to march and follow the King, the commotion in the town grew so great, that they would not suffer the cavalry to move; nay, the troops joined the mob, and M.. de Damas, after a long and painful struggle, was obliged to escape *alone*, to share the misfortunes of his master, of which he however had even then no apprehensions.

Beyond Clermont, the next posting stage on the great road was Verdun—which it had been arranged that the King was not to pass through, but on quitting Clermont, to turn off, at right angles, to the left, by a cross-road leading towards Stenay, M. de Bouillé's head-quarters, and where the General himself was waiting for them. The first place on this cross-road was Varennes —a small town where there is no post-house, and where therefore travellers generally sent horses in advance. This precaution M. de Bouillé had of course taken for the royal party, which arrived at Varennes before Drouet, and, as they knew nothing of his pursuit, they might now have congratulated themselves on being out of all danger: they were within M. de Bouillé's command—they had no postmaster to fear—no difficulty in getting horses to apprehend, for M. de Bouillé's horses were ready for them—it was dark—they were in no danger of being recognised—it was late—the whole

town was asleep—strong detachments of troops were placed in advance, and others were following them; interruption seemed impossible; yet *here* it was—in the only spot of the whole road where no danger was to be expected—that, to use the poor King's own expression, '*the earth seemed to open to swallow them!*' He had used the expression at Somme-Velle: it was accomplished at Varennes.

We left Drouet on the road to Clermont, which, by another accident, apparently favourable, but really fatal to the King, he never reached. He supposed that the travellers were proceeding on the high post-road to Verdun, and, under that impression, he might have lost more time, and perhaps failed altogether,* but before he arrived at Clermont he met his own postilions on their return, and they, unfortunately, had heard the courier on the seat of the King's carriage direct the Clermont postilions '*à Varennes*'—the road to which turned to the left out of the Verdun road. Drouet, of course well acquainted with all the localities, saw the advantage this gave him; he abandoned the high road at once, turned also to the left, avoiding Clermont, and made a short cut to Varennes.

Varennes is a small town, of about 1500 inhabitants, with a wall, but, as appears, no gates. It consists of three parts—a small suburb on the Paris road; the town itself, situated on a hill, with a steep and narrow street, running down to a bridge over the little river *Aire*, beyond which is a lower suburb, in which was the inn of the *Grand Monarque*, where M. de Goguelat had placed the King's relays, and where had arrived that morning the Chevalier Jules de Bouillé, the General's youngest son, and M. de Raigecourt, who were to superintend the relay and secure the King's passage. There were also placed, in what had been a convent, in the upper town, a detachment of sixty hussars under the command of a young officer, *M. Rohrig.*

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* He had a narrow escape from a more immediate danger: one La Gache, an intelligent and active quartermaster of M. d'Andoins' detachment at Ste. Menéhoud—apprised by the daughter of the innkeeper that Drouet had discovered the King and was gone in pursuit of him—mounted his horse and pursued Drouet in his turn, and had him in sight when Drouet turned off the road into a wood, where La Gache endeavoured to follow him but could not make his way, and was forced to return by the high road to Clermont where he found M. de Damas' regiment in mutiny.

M. de Valory arrived at the entrance of the faubourg about half past ten, where it seems from his relation he expected to find the relays—he found nothing and nobody. In vain does he examine the '*appointed* place' (*l'endroit indiqué*); he does not say what the *place* was, but found a *wood*, in which he seems to have thought that the relay might be placed. This he entered and searched without success—he then entered the town, found all quiet, but could neither see nor hear anything of the relay. While thus perplexed, sounds begin to reach him on both sides; on the one the noise of the carriages coming along the road, on the other some movement in the town. Of all these proceedings he gives a very confused report, which perhaps may be accounted for by his having ridden 150 miles in twenty-three hours, without rest or even pause; but at last he tries back and finds the carriage at the entrance of the faubourg, and the King informs him that, while waiting there for him, a courier, who turned out to be Drouet, had gone by and ordered the postilions not to proceed.

The King had arrived at about half past eleven, and was astonished not to find either the relay or his own courier at the entrance of the suburb, where he so certainly expected them that the postboys had been ordered at Clermont to stop there, and they now refused to go forward. All the accounts represent the town as buried in sleep, so that not only the courier, but even the King and Queen, knocked up the inhabitants of the suburb to inquire for their horses: in the mean while Drouet arrives, passes the royal carriages in the suburb, ordering the postilions not to proceed further; while he and Guillcaume enter the town, where he appears to have conducted his enterprise with a coolness and sagacity that would have done him honour in a better cause. He gave no alarm, but quietly collecting half-a-dozen other persons, whose principles he probably knew to be his own, they first pushed on to the bridge, which they barricaded by overturning on it a waggon laden with furniture, which they happened to find there: they also barricaded the road, alarmed the town, assembled the magistrates, collected the mob, and arrested the carriages under the gateless arch of the town-wall, and finally, forcing the travellers to alight, took them to the house of one Sausse, the *Procureur de la Commune*, in a bye street,

where they were finally arrested. In all these preliminary proceedings Drouet expressly says* that 'they were in all but *eight* patriots, *de bonne volonté*.'

Here is Madame Royale's account of this scene:—

'After a great deal of trouble the postilions were persuaded that the horses were waiting at the castle [at the other side of the town and the river], and they proceeded that way, but slowly. When we got into the village we heard alarming shouts of Stop! stop! The postilions were seized, and in a moment the carriage was surrounded by a great crowd, some with arms and some with lights. They asked who we were; we answered, "Madame de Korff and her family." They thrust their lights into the carriage close to my father's face, and insisted upon our alighting: we answered that we would not; that we were common travellers, and had a right to get on: they repeated their orders to alight on pain of being put to death, and at that moment all their guns were levelled at the carriage. We then alighted, and in crossing the street six mounted dragoons passed us, but unfortunately they had no officer with them; if there had been, six résolute men would have intimidated them all, and might have saved the King.'

There were not merely six but sixty men in barracks in the next street. We believe with Madame that six, or even *one*, resolute man would have had *then*, and for an hour or two later, a chance of saving the King, but the King himself wanted the resolution even to consent to be saved.

We must now advert to other circumstances by which, while success was still retrievable, all was lost. There can be no doubt that the programme furnished to the King must have specified, or at least implied, that the relay was to wait at the entrance of the suburb on the Paris side; while the fact was, that M. de Goguelat had placed it at the other end, beyond the river. He has been censured for doing so, but unjustly; for on a balance of considerations it was surely more prudent that the fugitives should have passed through the town and over the bridge before they ran the risk of a stoppage; and the

* In a speech delivered at the bar of the National Assembly on the 25th, and published in the 'Moniteur' of the 26th. It is a clear and modest narrative; and if Drouet's subsequent participation in the reign of terror had not justly rendered him an object of general execration, his conduct in the affair of Varennes would have appeared—making due allowance for his principles and the general delusion of the day—not so discreditable as it is generally thought. He performed cleverly what he thought a duty.

unusual appearance of a relay was evidently less liable to observation out of the town than within it. M. Goguelat's unpardonable error was not having taken care to apprise the king's courier where the relay was to be found. But even that omission might not have been fatal, if the two young officers in charge of the relay had not acted with what must at first sight appear strange heedlessness, if not absolute negligence. Could it have been thought possible that, aware as they were of the importance of the service confided to them, all this disturbance should have been going on for an hour, at one end of a small town, before it came to the knowledge of officers stationed at the other expressly to watch for any such commotion? But so it was; and it was not till the whole town was alarmed and illuminated that the Chevalier de Bouillé and M. de Raigecourt awoke, either from sleep or apathy, and, instead of making the slightest attempt with sixty hussars to relieve the king, rode away, taking the carriage horses with them, to tell the Marquis de Bouillé that all was lost; while M. Rohrig, the young sub-lieutenant, who had the immediate command of the dragoons, also rode off, leaving his men under the sole command of a disaffected non-commissioned officer.

MM. de Bouillé and Raigecourt have, however, more to say in defence of their conduct than M. de Goguelat or the Duke de Choiseul. In the first place they state most truly that they had nothing to do with the choice of the place for the relay. They arrived at noon, and went as directed to the inn, the *Grand Monarque*, where M. de Goguelat had the day before placed the relay. They admit and claim merit for having kept themselves close in their inn all day, as they were ordered to do, not to create observation; but after dinner, as if for a walk, they strolled through the town; and afterwards, quickening their pace, they walked nearly half way to Clermont, in the hope of meeting M. de Goguelat, who they were instructed to expect *en courier*. As it grew dark, they began to fear that M. de Goguelat might come by some other road; and hastened back to the *Grand Monarque*. At half past nine arrived *en poste* the Duke of Choiseul's cabriolet with the two servants, who repeated to them the contents of the duke's note, that the King was not to be expected. This intelligence, and the mere fact of the arrival of the cabriolet *en poste*, relieved them from all doubt, difficulty, or responsibility; for besides the intimation that the King was not coming, it proved

practically, what, perhaps, they might not otherwise have been sure of, that the Duke and M. de Goguelat knew where the relay was placed, and they could have no idea that the King and his party should not have been as well informed as the two servants. On this point, therefore, the young men had no uneasiness; but still they, like M. de Damas, doubted whether they could rely on M. de Choiseul's message that the affair had been postponed; and M. de Raigecourt, about eleven o'clock, walked to the upper town to see M. Rohrig, who was not in the secret, but whose detachment was to form the escort of the supposed treasure. These troops were quartered in a *ci-devant* convent. M. Rohrig's own lodging was close to the Paris entrance of the town. M. de Raigecourt told him that though the treasure had not arrived as soon as it was expected, it might come in the night, and that therefore he should keep his men and horses on the alert, to be called out at any hour. M. de Raigecourt walked back to his inn: it was then *a quarter past eleven!* One cannot help throwing away a useless wish, such as sometimes intrudes on reading the unlucky incidents of a novel, that M. de Raigecourt did not pursue his doubt of M. de Choiseul's intelligence a hundred yards and ten minutes farther, and had, as M. de Damas did at Clermont, and as he himself had done early in the evening, strolled outside the town, and loitered ever so little in the suburb — M. de Valory, if not already arrived, was but a few minutes distant! M. de Raigecourt had certainly no reason for any such precaution: the servants had found the appointed inn, and he supposed that all who were following were as accurately informed. No doubt, we repeat, on *this* point could have occurred to the two young gentlemen.

But it was further reproached to them that they went to bed and were asleep while the turmoil was going on in the upper town. They admit that they ordered supper and beds: how could they avoid doing so, if they were to escape observation and suspicion? But the imputation of being really in bed or asleep they indignantly deny. We cannot, however, but think that, after having received M. de Choiseul's message, they might have been forgiven if they had been so, and that, in fact, they might as well, according to their own statement, have been asleep as awake; for M. de Raigecourt's Narrative states that—

'at half-past eleven we returned to our bed-rooms—extinguished our lights, but opened our windows—and kept a profound silence—

about twelve, we heard many persons passing and repassing, but without tumult, some even stopped under our windows, but we were not able to distinguish what they were saying.'

But, on the other hand, may it not be fairly asked, why they did not try to find out the cause of this movement? Why, when they heard a stir, did they remain half an hour or twenty minutes in total inaction and ignorance? At last, about half-past twelve, he tells us:—

'The tocsin was rung—the drums beat to arms—the tumult became very great. *Terror seemed to prevail.* I believe at that moment *ten or even fewer* determined men would have routed that frightened (*effarée*) populace. A general cry informed us that the King was in Varennes, betrayed, and a prisoner.'

But what, then, had these young gentlemen been about; and what, when the *general cry* had told them the worst, did they now do? Placed there specially to prevent tumult—to restrain the populace—did they hasten to the scene? did they follow the sounds? did they attempt to communicate with the—not '*ten*,' but sixty—hussars that they had themselves half an hour before ordered to be on the alert? nothing like it:—

'Not doubting that the King would be soon relieved from the rioters (*debarrassé des mutins*), and that he would get through very soon, we thought only of saving the relay, which we placed on the high road fifty yards from the inn—but before we could do so, two of the horses and one postilion were seized by the people that invested the house.'

Even this, it seems, they could not understand; for he adds:—

'After we had been there ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, *what was our astonishment* at not only not seeing the King come, but at seeing no sign of any steps towards relieving him.'

But what were their grounds for 'not doubting that he would soon get through;' for they did not even know what had stopped him? Why should they have been 'astonished' at not seeing him when they must have seen the bridge barricaded, and found themselves put to flight, with the loss of half their relay? And where was the King to look for any relief but to them and the sixty hussars under their orders? They only thought of the hussars to conjure

up in their own fancy another misfortune which had not taken place:—

'we *judged* that the hussars must have laid down their arms—we *then* saw that there was *no more time to be lost*, and we hastened away to acquaint the Marquis de Bouillé with what had passed. It was about a *quarter to one* when we left Varennes.'

Without venturing to conjecture what more sense, *sang froid*, and energy might have done, we must say that such a defence of the neglect and dereliction of a special, and we may even say sacred, duty, is unparalleled in our recollection. Well might M. de Raigecourt say, '*Terror seemed to prevail!*' Everybody seems to have been panic-struck!

Before we revert to what was happening about the King's person, we must observe that there is some reason to suspect that the degree of tumult was considerably exaggerated, and that, as Madame says and M. de Raigecourt admits, a very little resistance in the first instance might have saved the King. Drouet seems to have shown a great deal of sense and judgment, as well as activity, and to have made at first as little noise as possible, so as not to alarm the officers and troops, of whose proximity he must have been aware; and being, no doubt, well acquainted with those of the inhabitants who were of his own party, he went from house to house, and soon collected, not many, but enough to barricade the suburb, on one side—the bridge on the other—to stop the carriages, and overbear the King. But still, however quietly all this might be done, we cannot read without surprise the account given by M. de Damas—the most impartial and trustworthy witness of the whole array, except Madame Royale—of the state in which *he* found the town, even after the flight of young de Bouillé and Raigecourt. M. de Damas had effected his retreat from Clermont with only two or three officers and a few men of his regiment, and followed the road to Varennes, at no very rapid pace, having, he says, no apprehension that the King could be in any danger. He knew that the commotion at Clermont was only against the troops; and he believed that the King, who had been gone two hours, was, by means of the relays prepared for him at Varennes, far beyond the reach of any interruption. He and his small party congratulated themselves that the King was safe, and calculated that they should not overtake him before Dun

or Stenay. At the entrance of Varennes, however, he found a small body of peasants, who had made a kind of barricade across the high-road, and would have stopped him. He leaped the barricade, and entered the town :—

'It was now,' he says, 'half-past twelve; I passed through the town (which I ought hardly to call a town, as it has but 1500 inhabitants) down to the bridge, which is at the foot of the hill. I saw in the street some hussars on foot. I asked them why they were not on horseback? they said they had no orders. I sent them back to their barracks. I saw no sign of disorder or insubordination. I went on to the bridge, where a cart with some furniture had been overturned. I removed some of the furniture and passed on to the *Grand-Monarque;* I found it shut up. Here I met a mounted policeman, who in great excitement told me that some travellers had been arrested, and were in the house of the Procureur of the Commune—that two officers who had inn'd at the *Grand-Monarque* with a relay of horses had fled hastily (*à toutes jambes*) towards Stenay, and that he had pursued them without being able to overtake them. I recrossed the bridge; by this time I found a few more people on the market-place, some with guns and some dragging a kind of little cannon, but nothing as yet very imposing. I ascended a narrow street in which was the house of the Procureur de la Commune, where I found M. de Choiseul with his sword drawn at the head of a detachment of hussars.'—*Rel. de M. de Damas.*

That some time after MM. de Bouillé and Raigecourt had been frightened away, M. de Damas and his small party should have traversed the town, and passed and repassed the bridge without finding much agitation or any interruption, seems quite irreconcileable with M. de Raigecourt's statement, and proves that the tumult was neither so early nor so general, and confirms the opinion that up to the arrival of Lafayette's missionaries from Paris, and even some time later, it would have required no extraordinary exertion of common sense and courage to have rescued the King. The force in hand would have been fully adequate to awe even a worse mob than Varennes could have produced—the sixty hussars quartered there, and in whom M. de Damas saw no symptoms of disaffection; the forty under the Duke of Choiseul, who had by this time arrived; a dozen of tried men of M. de Damas's own regiment, who had accompanied or followed him; and another detachment of sixty hussars, under M. Deslons, who arrived from the opposite quarter before the King was removed: here there were not *six*, nor *ten*, but above 150 men; but the surprise, the difficulties,

the tremendous importance of the crisis, distracted and paralyzed the minds of every one; and it must, in justice to all the officers engaged in the affair at this critical moment, be confessed that the irresolution and timidity of the King himself might excuse, if it did not entirely, justify their conduct. No one present except Louis had any right to command; and the only orders that Louis could be induced to give were, to do nothing. The boldest thing he said was to M. Deslons, who had come into the town to receive his orders —'*I am a prisoner, and have no orders to give!*' If Deslons had been in command, he might have taken this hint and acted without those orders which a *prisoner* could not give; but he was only a captain, and his own colonel and two other superior officers were present. They happened, unluckily for this purpose, to be too intimate with, too much personally devoted to their amiable and kind-hearted master, to venture to do him the salutary violence which his complaint, more than once made, of being a *prisoner*, was, perhaps, meant to suggest. Every one was intimidated. Even the high spirit of the Queen herself seems on this occasion to have failed before the *strenua inertia* of the King.

The first and most pressing necessity was to get the King to take a high tone, and insist peremptorily on his right to proceed; but he yielded to every insidious excuse for delay that his captors made; and by and by, when they had at last resolved to force him away to anticipate the possibility of the advance of M. de Bouillé's army to rescue him, he as easily yielded to their impulses. He does not seem to have shown or felt the least degree of personal fear, but his timidity of temper, his strong aversion to violence; and the presence of his wife, sister, and children, produced the same effect that the most abject fear would have done—though he still managed, as he did in many similar scenes, to maintain a calm dignity of deportment.

During this protracted and painful trial, a variety of schemes of rescue (one so extravagant as to carry off the ladies and children on dragoon horses) were by turns proposed and rejected; and all hope seemed at last to be narrowed to the arrival of M. de Bouillé's army, when, between five and six in the morning, arrived an aide-de-camp of Lafayette with a decree of the National Assembly for the King's arrest and his immediate conveyance to Paris. This officer, or any other emissary from Paris, would have been intercepted, if M. de Choiseul had kept the high road.

His coming accelerated the removal of the King, who, after several attempts at delay made by those about him, was forced away about 8 A.M., and was an hour and a half on the road to Paris before M. de Bouillé and his advanced guard arrived on the opposite suburb of Varennes.

Ill news, they say, flies fast—it did not, however, in this case; for, though the distance was only nine leagues, young Bouillé and Raigecourt were four hours and a half* in reaching the Marquis's head-quarters at Stenay; but this was not the only misfortune. The Marquis of Bouillé, knowing, of course, nothing of the Duke de Choiseul's proceedings or of his unfortunate note or messages, or of any other deviation from his plan and orders, had left Stenay with his eldest son and his staff at nine o'clock of the evening of the 20th, and had advanced close to Dun (the next stage to Varennes), which, for fear of creating alarm, he did not enter, but stationed himself by the road-side, a mile or two short of the town, awaiting the King's courier. There they passed, as the Count de Bouillé relates, a night of hopes and fears at every sound that reached them, and at last of despair when day came and they saw nothing of the King. M. de Bouillé then guessed that there must have been some derangement of his plan, and thought it right *to return to Stenay*. This seems to have been a strange error in judgment, and the only one we can attribute to that able officer; instead of retrograding, it surely would have been more reasonable to have pushed forward to Dun, which was within sight—or to Varennes, which was but ten or twelve miles further—or, in short, as far as his command extended, to discover where the hitch had arisen. To return to Stenay was to retire from the possibility of learning what it was most essential to know. He had not, however, reached Stenay when he was overtaken by his younger son and M. de Raigecourt, and, even more to his surprise, by the officer commanding the detachment at Varennes, M. Rohrig. These gentlemen reported vaguely the misfortune of Varennes, the full extent of which they had, in truth, not waited to see; and M. de Bouillé, astonished at what he could not comprehend, and not knowing what had become of his various detachments, resolved to advance immediately with the only troops that

* The *hours* here, as every where else, given by the several parties, are so *studiously* adapted to their own respective views of the results, that it is extremely difficult and indeed impossible to reconcile them. We make the best average we can.

he had at hand and of whose fidelity he was assured, the regiment of *Royal-Allemand* dragoons, which he had ordered the night before to be held in instant and constant readiness to march. The colonel, however, the Baron de Mandell, had strangely neglected his orders. He was in bed and asleep, as was the whole regiment—nothing and nobody was ready.

At last, however, they marched, but not before another incident strongly indicative of the general spirit of insubordination and disaffection which had pervaded the army as well as the nation. There had been an early antipathy between this regiment of *Royal-Allemand* and the revolutionary populace (*ante*, p. 57); and there was no doubt that the regiment continued in the same good disposition; yet on that morning, before he ventured to move it, M. de Bouillé thought it, if not necessary, at least expedient, to distribute among them 400 louis (we suppose *one* per man), and to make them a short harangue on the glory of the service to which he was leading them, and a promise that they were to receive, in case of success, the rank and title of the King's *German Body Guards*. Of course this speech, garnished with such a bounty, was received with cries of *Vive le Roi;* but M. de Bouillé's thinking it necessary to propitiate this favourite regiment shows how strong his distrust must have been of the general spirit of his troops, and leads us to doubt whether, even if he had gotten the King to Montmédy, he would have eventually been better obeyed by his army than Lafayette and Dumouriez subsequently were, when they appealed to their troops against the violence of the National Assembly.

At an early period of his march the General must have seen that all was lost. They found all the villages in insurrection, the tocsin ringing; the population in commotion; and they had even to brush away some parties of National Guards which endeavoured to stop them. When they had arrived in front of Varennes they found there Deslons, who informed them that the King had been carried off more than an hour before; that the King had told him that being a prisoner, he had no orders to give, but that he, Deslons, being indignant that such a violence should be committed while there was at hand a force capable of resisting it, had taken upon himself to make an attempt of rescuing the '*prisoner*' on the road. The bridge of Varennes had been by this time too strongly barri-

caded to be forced; no one knew of any ford; Deslons and his dragoons swam the river, and had some prospect of overtaking the King, when they were stopped by a canal, which they could neither leap, ford, nor swim, and were forced to return to await the arrival of orders of the General. It was by another of these accumulated accidents that contributed to the grand disaster that M. Deslons had not all along been in command of the detachment at Varennes. He was originally placed there; but on some doubts being hinted as to his attachment to the royal cause he was recalled the *very day before* from Varennes and placed at the less critical post of Dun; while by another accident it happened that he was succeeded at Varennes by the young and inexperienced sous-lieutenant who seems to have been peculiarly inadequate to any such charge.

There was now nothing more to be done; a further pursuit would have been vain—rescue impossible; and the captivity of the unfortunate Monarch at the very place and moment at which his escape might have reasonably been considered as certain, was irrevocably accomplished by such a series of accidents, all tending to one fatal point, as cannot, we believe, be paralleled in the history of unfortunate princes.

M. de Bouillé himself had now no alternative but to make his own retreat and escape; and that very evening he and twenty-one officers, who were more particularly attached to his person or implicated in his measures, crossed the frontier into the Emperor's territories. The *Royal-Allemand* and two detachments of hussars which had remained steady would have followed him: this he would not permit; but with the gentlemen who accompanied him, and some others that soon after joined him, he formed a company which was incorporated in the corps of the Prince de Condé. He afterwards joined the English army under the Duke of York, and subsequently resided in London, where he died the 14th November, 1800.

On the final arrest of the King, MM. de Choiseul, de Damas, de Goguelat, who was wounded in a scuffle with a National Guard, and the three Gardes-du-corps, were made prisoners. The three former were sent to different prisons; the three last were placed on the front seat of the King's carriage, where their bright yellow liveries attracted a peculiar degree of popular notice and violence.

The journey to Paris was a lingering agony of insult and

danger. The National Guards of Varennes at first, and subsequently those of other towns, insisted on their right to guard the prisoners; and as they marched on foot the journey lasted no less than four* days. While passing Ste. Ménéhoud, a country gentleman of the neighbourhood, the Marquis de Dampierre, having approached the King's carriage, and expressed some sympathy, was instantly massacred. A little past Châlons the prisoners were met by three members of the Assembly, Petion, Barnave, and La Tour Maubourg, who were charged by a decree with their conveyance to Paris. Barnave and Petion took their places in the royal carriage, Madame de Tourzel making room for one of them by going in another carriage with La Tour Maubourg. During the three days between Châlons and Paris, Petion behaved with vulgarity, not to say brutality. Barnave, on the contrary, was well-bred and respectful, and treated his prisoners with decorum. The Queen had been at first reserved, not to say sulleh; but Barnave won her goodwill by exerting himself, at her request, to save the life of a poor priest about to be massacred, for the same cause as M. de Dampierre had been. The King and Queen became gradually conciliated by his good manners and impressed with his talents, and he in turn was struck by the good sense, good nature, and honesty of the King, and captivated by the graces and surprised at the intellectual powers of the Queen. This was the origin of the confidence that afterwards grew up between them, and of Barnave's sincere and honourable but ineffectual efforts to be of use to them in their subsequent difficulties.

The entrance of the royal prisoners into Paris seemed to the royalist writers to have been studiously managed to protract the spectacle of their humiliation. They were taken a league round to bring them in by the great avenue of the Champs-Elysées, and up the centre of the Tuileries Gardens. But this was probably a prudential measure, to avoid the danger of a passage through the streets. An epigrammatic programme was issued for the demeanour of the spectators:—*Whoever applauds the King shall be beaten—whoever insults him shall be hanged!* This also may have been

* M. Thiers, always inaccurate—but this once, against the Revolutionists—says it lasted *eight* days, though no dates in the history of the world are more notorious than that the King set out from Varennes on the morning of Wednesday the 22nd, and arrived in Paris in the afternoon of Saturday the 25th June, 1791.

meant for precaution rather than insult, to avoid the occasion of a tumult. The first portion, however, of it was only obeyed; for both he and the Queen were insulted in the most brutal manner during the whole of their passage; and on their arrival at the château the Gardes-du-corps were seized by the populace, severely wounded, and would have been massacred if Barnave again, at the urgent prayer of the Queen, had not rescued them. They were sent to the security of prison, while a decree of the Assembly placed the royal family under a system of restraint and coercion in the palace of the Tuileries, more severe, more insulting, and more personally indecent than malefactors would have suffered in any ordinary gaol.

They and all their attendants in this calamitous expedition remained in their several prisons till the 13th September, when the acceptance of the new Constitution and a decree consequent upon it for a general amnesty relieved the royal family from the more offensive restraints on their persons, and their faithful followers from their several prisons.

This amnesty has afforded M. Thiers the occasion of another of those perfidious travesties of facts with which his work swarms. We have already observed (p. 47) on the unscrupulous disregard of truth with which in his early volumes he flattered his *then* patron, Lafayette. This affair of the amnesty is an additional instance. He tells us,—

'The Constitution was offered to the King's acceptance, what could he do? To reject it would be to abdicate in favour of the Republic. The safest course even in his own system was to accept it, and to await from time the restoration of the powers which he thought he ought to have. He therefore accepted, and appeared in person to announce it to the Assembly. Lafayette, *who never forgot to redress and remedy* (*réparer*) the misfortunes inevitably incident to political troubles, proposed a general amnesty for all acts connected with the revolution. This amnesty was proclaimed amidst shouts of joy, and the prisons were at once opened.'

Who would not think from this statement that while Louis accepted the Constitution only to gain time for an opportunity of altering it, the spontaneous and generous humanity of Lafayette had remembered—what the selfish and ungrateful monarch had forgotten—the noble duty of closing the wounds that had been inflicted, and of saving the lives that were still in danger?—

who that knew no history but M. Thiers's could imagine that this identical amnesty—the spirit in which it should be framed, and the various classes which it should embrace, formed the most prominent portion of the official document by which the King accepted the Constitution, and that Lafayette did no more than move the adoption of the *King's* proposition? The merit of his co-operation in this good work we will not further attenuate than by suggesting, that if prompted by his personal feelings it also coincided with his political interest. We only claim for the King the benevolent initiative—for him and the Queen a grateful and vigilant anxiety for the safety of their poor friends and servants, suffering for their sakes—a feeling so strong as to have had a considerable influence on the King's reluctant acceptance of the Constitution, in which he had little, and no one else any confidence.

The amnesty, however, was but a delusion—at best a respite—and the ulterior history of all the parties to the transactions we have been describing may be summed up in three words,—exile, the dungeon, and the scaffold.

It is not without some reluctance that, after a story of so much higher interest, we proceed to complete our account of the escape of the royal family with the Narrative by the Comte de Provence, afterwards Louis XVIII., of his simultaneous and better-managed proceedings. This Prince had in early life acquired something of a literary character: one or two little theatrical pieces were ascribed to his pen, and he was considered to be even a *puriste* in the French language. The work, however, does not, we are told, support that reputation; and the French critics go so far as to say that the language in many places is vulgarly ungrammatical. On this point we cannot presume to judge; but it must be admitted that the work does not place his Most Christian Majesty very high in the list of royal authors, for we may venture to say the style is bad, the observations puerile, and the sentiments far from noble. When on its first appearance it was mentioned before M. de Chateaubriand, he exclaimed—*Ah, mon Dieu, ne m'en parlez pas; c'est un malheur ridicule.* But it must in fairness be added that he had a personal pique against the King.

So trivial a work would have been scarcely worth notice, but for the high and arduous task to which its author was destined, and for which, let us admit at once, that he showed qualities much

more adequate than we should, *à priori*, have expected from the impression which this narrative gives of his personal character, the course of his feelings, and the turn of his mind.

He had, no doubt, naturally more intellectual activity than his brother Louis; something more of mental cultivation; he could at least so much better avail himself of his acquirements as to have had a kind of a reputation as a *diseur de mots*. Adversity, too, and the school of Ulysses, for more than double the probation of the Ithacan,* must have both enlarged and consolidated his mind to a degree that enabled him to fulfil his complicated duties to France and to Europe, not merely with respectability, but with considerable dexterity, a well-calculated policy, and what may be fairly called a well-deserved success. He was the contrary of most princes—better than his promise—which certainly was not, as we shall see, very brilliant.

He left Paris the same night as the King, and by the exertions of the young Count d'Avaray, who supplied to him that activity of which the poor King had unfortunately deprived himself, he effected his passage to Brussels. The following account of his departure from his palace of the Luxembourg is more curious than dignified. Surrounded almost as closely as his brother with spies, he could not trust his own servants with his intentions; and was obliged, as the King had been, to go to bed to get rid of their attendance:—

'As soon as my valet-de-chambre was gone I got up again, and, drawing close the curtains of my bed, I took the few effects I meant to carry with me and went into my closet, of which I shut the door, and from that moment, either from presentiment, or from confidence in d'Avaray, I felt that I was already out of France. D'Avaray (who was waiting for me in the private apartments) dressed me, and, when I was so, I remembered that I had forgotten my cane and a *second* snuff-box which I wished to bring away.—I was going back to look for them; but d'Avaray would not permit such rashness, and I did not persist in my intention. The clothes fitted me very well, but the wig was a little too tight; however, as it fitted tolerably, and as I was resolved, whenever I could, to keep

* The Homeric text is curiously appropriate:—

Ἀνδρα ..... πολύτροπον ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·
Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἀστεα, καὶ νόον ἔγνω·
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμον
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων.—Odys. i. 1.

a large round hat with a great tri-coloured cockade over my eyes, the ill-fitting of the wig did not give us much trouble. In crossing the private apartments, d'Avaray told me that there was a carriage like our own waiting in the great court of the Luxembourg; this made him uneasy, but I quieted him by acquainting him that it was my wife's; yet when we were on the stairs he desired me to wait, and went to see if it were still there. Not seeing it, he returned, saying, "*Come along with me.*"—"*I am ready,*" I replied, and we proceeded to our carriage, which was a vis-a-vis. By accident I had placed myself with my back to the horses. "What," said d'Avaray, "you are ceremonious?" "Faith," said I, "here I am."—He did not persist in his compliment, and, directing the coachman to drive to the Pont Neuf, we left the Luxembourg.'—pp. 43-47.

This is not, it must be confessed, in a very high style either of writing or feeling; but we confess that the passage which immediately follows excites some surprise.

"My joy which I felt at having escaped from my prison, a joy which d'Avaray sincerely shared, turned all our thoughts towards *gaiety*. And, accordingly, our *first impulse*, after crossing the threshold, was to sing a verse of the parody of the opera of Penelope—

"*Ça va bien,*
Ça prend bien,
Ils ne se doutent de rien."'—p. 46.

We should have thought the fear with which this Prince regarded his own jailers might have given him some sympathetic alarm for the fate of his wife, his brother, the Queen, the Dauphin, and the rest of the royal family, who were at that moment in the agonies of escape. As the Prince was, at this period, thirty-six years of age, we are the less prepared to excuse this exuberance of musical gaiety, which, however, seems to have been habitual; for on another occasion, in which the travellers escaped a very pressing danger in Laon—'as soon as we were clear out of the town, we sang with all our hearts *La victoire est à nous.*' Again—on his passing the frontiers, he tells us that he thanked God for the recovery of his liberty; but he adds that he pulled off his tricolor cockade to a tune of Gluck's opera of Armide, and discussed with d'Avaray the distribution of their apartments at the inn at Mons, 'by parodying the lines of Hippolyte and Aricie that begin with—*under the standard of Mars*, and changing "*misfortunes*" into "*mattresses*," at which we laughed heartily.'—p. 79.

Indeed it seems that the usual *Te Deum* of this Prince was an

opera tune. Gaiety *entems et lieu* is very well—*desipere in loco*—but all this singing and parodying, merely because he had individually escaped, while the fate of his whole family was in fearful suspense, seems to us to have been very silly and very selfish.

Just as bad is the anxiety everywhere expressed about breakfast, dinner, and supper: in one place four pages are employed in describing his fear of having a bad meal, and his '*very great and very agreeable surprise*' at finding, on the contrary, that the eatables were tolerable, and the wine excellent.

Even when more serious thoughts and duties present themselves they are disagreeably dashed with something of frivolity and selfishness. In stating the motives that induced him to quit France he mentions his reluctance to accept the services of the revolutionized clergy:—

'I was convinced,' he says, 'that I had no choice between apostacy and martyrdom; the former revolted me, and I will own I felt no great vocation for the latter. I talked a great deal with *Madame de Balbi* on this subject, and we agreed that there was a third course open to me, which was to abandon a country where the usual exercise of our religious duties was about to be proscribed.'

Now *Madame de Balbi* (*née* Caumont de la Force) was a lady separated from her husband, and supposed to be higher in Monsieur's favour than she ought to be; and we wish we could only smile at the simplicity with which the Prince makes a public confession that, though he would not accept the ministration of a Constitutional priest, he consulted *Madame de Balbi* on the spiritual concerns of his conscience!

We have seen that at first setting out he had forgotten his cane and a *second* snuff-box, and was only prevented by the strong remonstrance of M. d'Avaray from risking all by going back to fetch them. He, however, in a subsequent part of the journey, reverts to this loss in a strange way.

On taking leave of his sister, the saint-like Elizabeth, she presented him with a crucifix, saying, 'Dear brother, you are blessed with a sense of religion; allow me to give you this image, which cannot but bring you happiness.' He accepted it, he says, with equal pleasure and gratitude. It happened that at one stage, near Soissons, they were very ill driven, on which he observes—

'Although I seemed to make light of this, I felt in truth a *real anxiety*; I had within the last few miles discovered that I had

forgotten at Paris the image which my sister had given me, and, without being more devout than my neighbours, this loss really disturbed me, and gave me a great deal more anxiety than—*that of my cane and snuff-box!*'—p. 53.

Now, without affecting 'to be more devout than our neighbours,' we feel some surprise at the recurrence, on this occasion, to the *cane and snuff-box.*

Again; at the first inn beyond the French frontier his gratitude, first to heaven and then to M. d'Avaray, for his deliverance, are unpleasantly epilogued by complaints of the want of beds and the badness of the beer:—

'My first care, whilst inquiry was making after the accommodation which might be had there, was to throw myself on my knees in order to return thanks to God in a more suitable posture than I had till then been able to place myself in. Having performed that first duty, I fulfilled another, not less sacred or pleasing, by folding my dear d'Avaray in my arms, to whom I could now, for the first time, give, without fear and without indiscretion, the name of "my deliverer." We soon learnt, however, that there were no means of either sleeping or eating in this abominable inn, and all we could obtain was a little destestable beer.'

And when, two days later, he had some doubts as to the political expediency of accepting an invitation from the Bishop of Namur, he seems quite satisfied with the propriety of having done so by his having had 'a very good supper,' though the Bishop would have had him drink more than he liked of 'aniseed, a species of *liqueur* stronger than *kirchwasser*,' which however did not, as he tells in the same paragraph, prevent his 'writing a letter for the King, the Queen, or Madame Elizabeth, on the chance of its reaching them, which it never did.'

Such, we regret to say, is the staple of the work, and we really do not know that we could extract any more interesting specimen of it, except the following anecdote, which gives us a glimpse of two higher and nobler minds. On the night of the escape, the royal family—the King, Queen, Madame Elizabeth, *Monsieur* and Madame—were to sup together as usual; but before they met at supper, *Monsieur* saw his sister and the Queen. It was at this interview that Madame Elizabeth gave him the crucifix. He then goes on:—

'She and I conversed for some time on the subject of our approaching enterprise; and, without being blinded by my affection

for her, I must say that it was impossible to reason on the subject with more coolness and judgment than she did. I could not help admiring her!'

No one who reads the history of this Princess's life and death can help admiring her.

'I then went down to the Queen's apartment, for whom I had to wait for some time, because she was in private with the three Gardes-du-corps, who have since given to her, as well as to the King, the last melancholy proof of their devotion. At last she came: I ran to embrace her. "*Take care*," she said, "not to affect me (*m'attendrir*): *It must not be seen that I have wept!*"'

What a beautiful combination of strength of mind and tenderness of heart these words exhibit! How grateful we should have been to the Prince if he had given us more of the personal feelings of his relatives at that crisis; but we find nothing more of that class.

The most amiable feature of the work is the author's gratitude towards M. d'Avaray. Though it may often appear somewhat too emphatically expressed, it is due to him to record that it was sincere and lasting, and—considering the impression which his escape from misfortunes similar to those of his brother and his sisters must have made on his mind—not excessive. He owed to him, under Providence, his life, and eventually a throne, which his friend did not survive to see.

If the poor King had had a *M. d'Avaray*—that is, M. d'Agoult, or any other man of experience and resolution, and a common post-house courier—he, as we said at the outset, would probably not have been arrested at Varennes, nor murdered in Paris.

M. d'Avaray died in 1810 of a consumption at Madeira, where he was buried, but the King's affection survived, and found a consolation, at first in sending out from England a monument to be placed over his friend's grave, with a grateful epitaph from his own pen, and after the Restoration, in causing his remains to be brought to France and interred in the family vault of the chateau d'Avaray. He also conferred on the Marquis d'Avaray, the father, the rank of Duke and Peer of France.

NOTES ON THE GALLERY OF THE LOUVRE.

Referred to in p. 106.

Bassompierre's words are—

'Les fiançailles [du Prince de Condé et de Mlle. de Montmorency] se firent en la *galerie du Louvre*.'—*Mem.* i. 230.

This, however, would not be decisive that the whole gallery had been then completed, but the following passage is :—

'Le premier jour de Mai, revenant des Tuileries par *la grande galerie*, il [Henry IV.] s'appuyoit toujours sur quelqu'un, et alors il tenoit M. de Guise d'un côté et moi de l'autre; et ne nous quitta qu'il ne fut près d'entrer dans le cabinet de la Reine. Nous nous appuyames, en attendant, sur ces balustres de fer qui regardent dans *la cour du Louvre*.'—*Ib.* 287.

And on the very morning of the murder, after attending mass at the Feuillants, he returned '*by the Tuileries*,' and, no doubt, the gallery, to the Louvre, again accompanied by Bassompierre.—*Ib.* 290.

The destination, in the early part of the reign of Louis XVI., of the Gallery to the purposes of a NATIONAL MUSEUM of the fine arts is thus announced in that very curious and valuable chronicle of political, literary, and gossiping intelligence, called the '*Mémoires de Bachaumont*.'

'14 *Nov.* 1773.—Il y a une galerie d'une longueur immense qui unit le Palais des Tuileries à celui du Louvre. L'auteur propose d'y exposer les tableaux du Roi, les sculptures, les richesses mobilières de S. M. de toute espèce, entassés, soit dans la *Salle des Antiques*, soit dans divers garde-meubles.

'Ce projet présenté au Controleur-général en a été très bien accueilli, et ce ministre ne semble pas éloigné de s'y prêter.

'27 *Mars*, 1775.—La galerie du Louvre est destinée à un meilleur usage. On sait que c'est pour y exposer les tableaux du Roi et autres curiosités précieuses, qui se gâtent faute d'ordre, d'air et de propreté. D'ailleurs ce sera un Salon perpétuel pour former les élèves de la peinture et autres jeunes artistes par l'étude des grands modèles.

'25 *Mai*, 1780.—On persiste dans le projet de rétablir la grande galerie des Tuileries, et d'en faire un superbe *Muséon*.

'18 *Oct.* 1786.—Il est sérieusement question d'exécuter le projet de convertir en un vaste et magnifique *Musée* l'immense Galerie du Château des Tuileries, régnant le long de la rivière. On y exposera principalement une multitude de tableaux du Roi qui se gâtent: en y ajoutant d'autres ornements et quelques commodités, ce sera un lieu d'assemblée du public qui nous rappellera le Lycée, le Portique, les jardins d'Academus, et tous les autres monuments de ce genre qu'on voyait dans Athènes ou dans Rome.'—*Mémoires de Bachaumont.*

The delay in executing this project was probably occasioned by the growing financial difficulties of the Government; and I do not believe that any progress had been made prior to the Revolution; but it appears from a letter of Roland, Minister of the Interior, to David, the painter, in the Moniteur, of the 22nd Oct. 1792, that this appropriation had been revived and *decreed*, but it does not appear that anything more was done till Buonaparte executed with such splendour and success the original design.

I find also in Bachaumont the projects of three or four other great works which it was reserved for Buonaparte to execute.

The exact *site* and *material* of the *Iron Bridge* of Austerlitz were anticipated by letters patent of Louis XVI.

'10 *Dec.* 1787.—Le Roi a accordé des lettres patentes pour la construction d'un *pont de fer* en face de l'Arsenal et du Jardin du Roi.'—*Ib.*

And the esplanade called the *Rue de Rivoli*, and the two fine streets *de la Paix* and *de Castiglione*, which connect the Tuileries, the Place Vendôme, and the Boulevard, are designated with equal foresight.

'23 *Oct.* 1778.—Les faiseurs de projets s'évertuent sur la destination future de l'emplacement des Capucins de la Rue St. Honoré. Le plus beau est celui dont le plan serait de percer *une rue depuis le petit Carrousel jusqu'à la* Place de Louis XV., en prenant le terrain nécessaire du Manége, des Feuillants, des Capucins et de l'Assomption; de former *une autre rue perpendiculaire*, sur celle-là en face de la Place de Vendôme, qui aboutiroit à une grille du jardin des Tuileries; enfin d'en ouvrir *une troisième vis-à-vis* de l'autre côté de la Place de Vendôme, qui passeroit au milieu des Capucins, et iroit rejoindre le

*

rempart [*Boulevard*]. On prétend que, par le bénéfice que procureroient les façades qu'on se ménageroit dans toutes ces rues, on suffiroit aux dépenses de cet embellissement de la capitale, qui ne coûteroit ainsi rien à personne.'—*Ib.*

Napoleon III. has recently prolonged his uncle's *Rue de Rivoli* even to the Hôtel de Ville, but without as much addition to his popularity even amongst the workmen he employs as might have been expected, for the expense falls mainly on the price of provisions within Paris, and considerable inconvenience and dissatisfaction have been felt at the scarcity of lodgings for the poor that the destruction of so populous a quarter of the town has produced. The republicans see in these wide streets, and extended *places*, nothing but a clearer field for military action against the discontented population of the town, and M. Eugène Sue informs us that much additional ornamentation lately lavished on the exterior of the Louvre disguises loopholes and embrasures for military aggression or defence.

'Le Louvre lui-même—achevé toujours sous couleur de faire aller le bâtiment—le Louvre n'est lui-même qu'une redoutable Bastille décorée par les arts. Les *sinistres meurtrières* se dissimulent sous les sculptures des frises; l'on entrevoit les *embrasures des canons* derrière l'ornementation du soubassement des colonnades.' —*Lettres aux Electeurs, Mars* 1857.

However that may be, it cannot be denied that the effect is splendid, and the local improvements immense, and the whole design from first to last is of that *exceptional* and *grandiose* magnificence in which despots and usurpers only can venture to indulge their pride or their policy.

ESSAY IV.*

[On the 20th June and 10th August, 1792.]

Chronique de Cinquante Jours—du 20 Juin au 10 Août 1792, rédigée sur Pièces authentiques. Par P. L. Rœderer. Paris, 1832.

The *Fifty Days* from the 20th June to the 10th August, 1792, comprised the stormy transition of France from the Monarchy to the Republic, and have already had, and will probably continue to have, a greater influence on the destinies of mankind than any other fifty days in the history of the world; and though M. Rœderer's work tells us little that we did not already know, and is in fact not so much a *chronicle* of events as an *apology* for his own ambiguous conduct during a couple of hours of the last of the Fifty Days, it is important as the genuine—we cannot venture to say sincere or candid—testimony of one who was an eye-witness of all, and a party to the most critical of the transactions.

Pierre Louis Rœderer, born about 1756 of a respectable *famille de robe*, was, at the Revolution, a member of the provincial Parliament of Metz, and elected in 1789 to the Constituant Assembly, where he became an active Revolutionist, and took a large and popular part in the business, as well as the debates, of that body on which we are in the habit of looking with some degree of respect from a comparison with those that followed it. Being by the self-denying decree of *non-election* excluded from the second Assembly,† he—like Pétion, Robespierre, and other *disinterested* Constituants—took refuge in *a good* office, and became *Procureur*

* This Essay has been considerably enlarged. It was originally written in 1836, while M. Rœderer was still living, and before his work, privately printed, had become public; much of it was, in consequence, addressed controversially *ad hominem*—examining rather M. Rœderer's own share in the transactions, than the transactions themselves. But in venturing to reproduce these Essays as illustrative of the general history of the Revolution, I believe I shall be forgiven for contracting the personal and extending the political and historical view of the important period which M. Rœderer's work embraces.

† See the Essay on Robespierre.

Syndic (legal adviser and leading member) of the Council General of the Department of Paris.* It was in this character that, in his long and useless life there was *one remarkable hour* which confers upon him an eternal—and, if we are to believe himself, not dishonourable—celebrity. Being stationed at the Tuileries on the 10TH OF AUGUST, 1792, for the defence of the King's person and residence, he advised and almost forced the royal family to abandon the palace and to take refuge in the National Assembly; a step which, however expedient it might appear to M. Rœderer at the moment, did ultimately lead the royal victims to the jail and the scaffold. It is therefore not surprising that he—almost the sole surviving witness of these scenes and the individual most deeply responsible for the particular transaction—should be desirous of clearing away the doubts which have hitherto hung over his motives, and of showing that, whatever were the consequences of his advice, the advice itself was, under the circumstances, honest in its motive, and prudent in its object.

M. Rœderer proposes to answer two opposite charges which have been made against him—the one, by the *Mountain*, of being a royalist, and having *saved* the King; the other, by the royalists, of having *betrayed* him: and he seems to think that the mere accusation of having betrayed *both* sides is a sufficient proof that he did neither. Now, so far from getting rid of these apparently contradictory charges, M. Rœderer has the ill luck to persuade us of the *truth of both.* He was a royalist in the sense in which the Mountain employed the term—that is, he had no objection to a nominal, or, as it was then phrased, a constitutional king, but would have preferred the Duke of Orleans to Louis XVI.; and in either case desired that his own party should be '*viceroys over him.*' The Mountain was therefore justified in calling M. Rœderer a royalist—which he was *just as much* as his friend Vergniaud—who was a stanch monarchist at daybreak of the 10th of August—an equally stanch republican before midnight—a royalist one day—a *regicide* the next—and a renegade throughout!†

* The Council General or Directory of the *Department of the Seine*, often called the *Department*, was an administrative body of higher rank and superior authority to the *Municipality of Paris*, commonly called the *Commune*.

† Dr. Moore, whose able and impartial letters afford the very best history of this period, and whose chief acquaintance was with the Brissotins, says, 'I am myself a witness that the same men who were diametrically opposite in sentiments on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of August, seemed of the same way of thinking for some time after the 10th.'—i. 332.

But it is not the charge of being a *royalist* that most seriously offends his Excellency Count Rœderer—Peer of France—Councillor of State—Great Cross of the Legion of Honour—Ex-Minister of Finance to the King of Naples—Ex-Administrator of the Grand Duchy of Berg—Ex-Governor of Strasburg—Ex-Commissary at Lyons—in 1814 forwarding the restoration of Louis XVIII., and after the Revolution of 1830 writing pamphlets against revolutionary agitation, and in support of the *legitimate* monarchy of King Louis Philippe;—it is not, we say, against the charge of *royalism* that *his* complaints are most seriously directed,—no, his great effort is to refute the allegation that he betrayed Louis XVI. The shaft that rankles deepest and sorest in his heart is a sarcasm of forty years' standing, which an uneasy conscience seems to have kept festering all this time:—

'A *miserable mountebank*,' says his Excellency Count Rœderer, 'of the name of Richer Serizy, with his partner *Pelletier* [Peltier], another *hireling pamphleteer* of the civil list—thought it very pleasant to burlesque me [in the character of *Judas*], by putting into my mouth the words—*Ego sum qui tradidi eum.* [I am he who betrayed him.]'—p. 414.

These *liberals* are terribly *illiberal* in their attacks on others; and we owe it to the truth of history and to the characters of amiable and honest men to say that M. Richer Serizy was no miserable mountebank, but a writer of distinguished ability, and, what cannot be said of M. Rœderer himself, a man of unimpeachable consistency and honour. M. Peltier was, in all circumstances, as respectable as Rœderer could pretend to be, with a great deal more honesty and infinitely more talents; and much less obnoxious to any reproach that may be conveyed by the terms '*hireling pamphleteer*' than his Excellency, who was one of the most voluminous, time-serving, and overpaid pamphleteers of the day.*

But passing over these personal contests, in which M. Rœderer would certainly not have the best of it, we shall observe on the main question that the charge against Rœderer of having *betrayed* the King rests on two grounds: first, on the admitted *facts* of his own conduct during the 9th and 10th August; and secondly, on the *statement* which he published, a few days after, in a pamphlet, and re-published in the 'Moniteur' of the 24th August, 1792—

* See his article in the *Biographie des Contemporains.*

in which, seeing 'the sudden and unexpected turn' which things had taken, he endeavoured to exculpate himself from any share in the *resistance* to the mob, and especially from having ordered the Swiss guards to repel force by force. Unluckily, this defence contains, besides several *confessedly* false charges against the Swiss, many insinuations against the King, and particularly an avowal that Rœderer's object was to '*secure the King as an* HOSTAGE,' which were calculated to excite at the time an opinion that Rœderer was rather an *accomplice* than an opponent of the attack on the palace, which he was bound to defend.

In the present work he endeavours to explain away some of these unfortunate phrases—others he excuses on the score of the '*general error*' of the moment, as to the treachery of the Swiss; and he labours to give a colour of probability to the impudent fable (which we shall notice more particularly by-and-by), that there was a design on the part of the Court to attack the National Assembly. As to the unlucky phrase about '*securing the King as an hostage*'—which is really the gist of the whole case—his defence is a strange one—he neither denies the words nor explains them away,—what then? he *pleads* that they were a *falsehood*—a mere *invention* and *afterthought*, which he uttered only to conciliate what he calls '*ce tribunal d'égorgeurs*'—the Revolutionary Tribunal! Upon this double plea we must observe, first, that M. Rœderer seems to suppose that terror would be a sufficient excuse for any baseness—a doctrine which he certainly practised during his whole public life, but which we did not expect to hear him avow; but, secondly—if the excuse were valid—the assertion is chronologically and indisputably false; the Revolutionary Tribunal did not exist when Rœderer *wrote* his letter—and at the time of its republication in the Moniteur had tried but one person. But admitting that Rœderer was terribly frightened, what can be thought of such a defence as this—that, in his own *prospective* terror of the tribunal, still in embryo, he published a falsehood which could not fail to be injurious to other parties whose fate was *actually* in issue? But we really do not believe M. Rœderer to have been altogether so bad as he represents himself. His use of the word '*hostage*' was rather an ambiguity than a *falsehood*. He undoubtedly was desirous of saving the King's life—partly, we hope, from humanity, and partly, we believe, for the purpose of making him an instrument in the hands

of his party. He need not have told an untruth to excuse an expression which at the time was venial, and almost laudable—for the idea of keeping the King as an hostage was evidently favourable to the preservation of his life.

On the main point, as to his having really betrayed the King, our difficulty is as to the precise sense in which the word '*betray*' may be employed. M. Rœderer had no private ties to the King—he enjoyed no special confidence—he did not appear at the palace as the *King's friend*—he had been placed by his *party* in a prominent office, and he was probably disposed, as much by personal conviction as by political connexion, to forward the secret intentions of that party. He can hardly, therefore, be said to have personally *betrayed* the King: but, on the other hand, we cannot acquit him of having—from whatever motive—given the King false impressions and insidious advice, and of having notoriously *betrayed his public trust.* It was his duty to keep the peace, to vindicate the law, to maintain the King's authority, as well as to defend his palace and his person—it was his duty not merely to repel force by force, but to anticipate and arrest, while yet scattered and at a distance, the hostile movement: and when at last the insurgents came within reach, and their intentions admitted of no doubt, he ought to have attacked and dispersed them. This duty he assuredly betrayed. He paralyzed the resistance which *but for him* would certainly have been made, and would probably have been successful; and, what is worse, we believe that he went to and remained at the palace for the main purpose of *paralyzing that resistance.*

Before we enter into the details of the decisive insurrections of the 20th of June and 10th of August, which were in truth only the fourth and fifth acts of the great drama of the Fall of the Monarchy, it may be convenient to take a slight retrospect of the preceding scenes, and, for the sake of historic truth, to endeavour to distinguish these Parisian outrages from the general agitation of the public mind in France.

It cannot be doubted that the Revolution was hailed at its dawn with universal enthusiasm. No one could deny that great grievances existed in the legal, social, and moral condition of the nation, and that a large and deep reform was desirable and inevitable. The ancient constitution of France very closely resembled that of England. The provincial States, and their occasional union under

the title of the States General, answered pretty nearly to our Parliament; and the analogy may be traced, and even the name and practical working of this fundamental principle was preserved in the several *Parliaments* of the provinces, and especially in the Parliament of Paris, which was in name, composition, and functions, very like our High Court of Parliament. The Parliaments were a kind of standing Committees of the States; which, however imperfectly, exercised both a legislative and financial control on the otherwise absolute Government. It is a general but a great error to suppose that this suspension of the direct representative system particularly affected the People, as distinguished from the Noblesse and the Clergy. In truth these latter suffered proportionably more in their political importance, for their separate influence was more completely lost than that of the Tiers Etat, with which the Parliaments had maintained a more direct connexion. It is therefore not surprising that, in reason as well as in feeling (to say nothing of what nevertheless had a most important effect—the English example), the whole French nation saw with considerable satisfaction and prospective hope the revival of the ancient constitution of the States General, as old, and in theory analogous to, that of their Frank ancestors and their British neighbours. And if the States General had been allowed to maintain their ancient forms, and had limited themselves to their constitutional duties, they would have effected a *restoration* instead of a *revolution*.

We need not here attempt to repeat what we have often said of the disturbing causes which interrupted this hopeful progress—the arts, the seduction, the bribery, the organisation of a party, small in number but powerful in money and audacity, which seized on the general agitation and enthusiasm to connect administrative reform with the change of the reigning dynasty, and which terrified sober-minded reformers and intoxicated the giddy multitude.

The first step was the confusion of the three orders of States into a National Assembly—the next, the illegal and insulting defiance of the royal authority in the proceedings of the *Jeu de Paume*, closely followed by those armed insurrections which led to the capture and destruction of that bugbear the Bastille, which was odious, not as a real oppression, but as a veritable and tangible type of the *absolute* monarchy. Its capture gave no safeguard to individual or public liberty that the very act of the assembling of the States General had not already secured; but it served to

intimidate and paralyse a weak government, and to intoxicate and debauch an excited population. These encroachments and violences did not at once overthrow the existing monarchy: the King, though with an impaired and insufficient authority—and the National Assembly, though with a usurped power, were still free, and were proceeding—somewhat too incautiously and rapidly no doubt—in the wholesome work of regeneration. Then came the more important outrage of the 5th and 6th of October, which was directed almost as much against the National Assembly as the King. The Assembly itself was invaded by the Parisian populace even before the Palace; and though the King was the first led into captivity, that of the Assembly inevitably followed. If from the moment of the removal to Paris the King lost his independence, the Assembly as decidedly, though not so visibly, lost theirs. The King was not more a prisoner in the Tuileries than the Assembly itself was in the Manége—the mob were masters of both.

Here then was the great point of divergence: up to this the nation may be said to have been almost unanimous—all interests and all passions had gone together. Besides the general and rational desire of a reform in the administrative and political system, the *Noblesse* and the Clergy, and the Tiers Etat, were all glad to recover their ancient share in political power which had been so long *escamoté*—juggled from them by the uncertain and indefinite power of the *Parliaments*, and they flattered themselves that they had revived the defined and balanced authority of the *Four Estates;* for though three of the Estates had blended themselves into one, they were still the elected representatives of the three orders, and were, theoretically at least, supposed to be acting under their original constitutional *mandats*. Wise men had foreseen from the first union of the Orders the danger of the usurpation of the whole power by the Tiers Etat; but it was not till the violent transfer of the King and the Assembly to the tyranny of the mob of Paris that they lost all hope of preserving an equilibrium of authority. From this time forth we believe that the people of France—nay, the people, as distinguished from the *populace*, of Paris itself—had little (except by acquiescence or connivance, and terrified subservience) to do with the revolutionary movement. The Duke of Orleans originally, and subsequently those who at first trafficked in his name and finally

set up for themselves — Brissot, Pétion, Danton, Robespierre— became the leaders and directors of the hired mobs, who continued and reproduced *pro re natâ* the various atrocities which have damned them, and with them the Revolution, to everlasting shame. It is to them, not to the French nation (except, as we have said, by its intimidated submission), that we may in justice attribute the 20th of June, the 10th of August, the 2nd of September, and the long reign of terror which ensued.

We have before alluded to the series of outrages and dangers from which the King endeavoured to escape by the journey to Varennes. Even that humiliating event, though it produced a sensation not dissimilar from that of the capture of the Bastille, had not altogether extinguished the respect of the people for the ancient monarchy. The absurd Constitution of 1791 was maintained, with still more absurd additions; but the throne, though lowered and dishonoured, still remained, and the phantom of a king still appeared to occupy it. But as soon as the phantom appeared to acquire something of consistency and substance, and to attempt to exercise the functions with which the constitution had invested him, the same factions coalesced to annihilate his nominal, as they had already done his real authority.

From the moment that the acceptance and promulgation of the Constitution was so confidently proclaimed by all men of all parties to have tranquillized the kingdom and closed the Revolution, there never was one single day of real tranquillity—not one in which the King was free in the exercise of his great office, or in the circumstances of his private life—not one in which there were not alarming proofs of the unabated and daily-increasing audacity and exasperation of the Revolutionists throughout France, but especially of the great Jacobin faction in Paris, which—with slight differences of detail but with one common object—the overthrow of Louis XVI.—called itself the *People*. The working hands of these agitations were not even the populace of Paris—they were the same organized gangs of malefactors and murderers, under hired leaders, who had (to say nothing of minor agitations) already achieved the bloody riots of the 12th April, 12th, 14th, and 22nd July, and 5th and 6th October, 1789—the attack on the Châtelet, 15th January, 1790—the simultaneous attacks on Vincennes and the Tuileries, 28th February—the outrages on the King, 18th April—the insurrection of the Champ de Mars, 17th July,

1791—and who were now again ready for this 20th June, 1792, and who soon after crowned their terrible labours by the 10th August, and the 2nd and 3rd of September. There can be no doubt that these were all produced by the same organisation, guided by the same heads and executed by the same hands, and the accidental preservation of the ignoble and execrable names of Maillard, Denot, Hugonin, Jourdain, &c., is one of the many clues that enable us to trace the same influence in all these riots, from the massacres in 1789 to those of 1792.

In traversing this period of revolutionary history, this combined influence of *corruption and terror* of the public mind of Paris should never be forgotten. It seems to us to tell the history of four years in two words. The whole state of society was undermined, and the secret hands that held the incendiary clue were always able, on the slightest accident, or even without one, to produce a formidable explosion.

It is generally supposed and stated that the insurrection of the 20th of June was a movement occasioned by the dismissal of the Girondin ministry, and directed towards their restoration. We do not believe that the motive was either so sudden or so limited. That such were the ostensible pretences is certain, but we are satisfied they were only the accident of the moment, of which a conspiracy long before prepared and only waiting for an opportunity now availed itself. As this event was [illegible] a prelude and preparation of the fatal and final catastrophe of the 10th of August, and as its secret causes still remain very enigmatical, we shall be excused for endeavouring to examine the difficulties of the case, and for offering our conjecture as to their solution.

The second, or, as they chose to call it, the Legislative Assembly, was elected in September, 1791, under the influence of the combined—or perhaps we should rather say—the not yet separated revolutionary factions, of which, at the moment, the Brissotins were, if not the most powerful, at least the most prominent and predominant; and they very naturally, according to the recognised march and tactics of representative government, thought themselves entitled to the honours, emoluments, and powers of the Government; and the King, in pursuance of this representative principle, found it necessary to replace (March, 1792) what we may call a conservative cabinet by a ministry chosen from the ranks of those who called themselves patriots. He accordingly, at the suggestion of

Brissot and his associates in the Assembly, who were themselves incapacitated by a law from ministerial office, chose Dumouriez, Lacoste, Duranthon, Roland, Servan, and Clavière. The latter three were at this time Jacobins of the same section as Brissot himself, and were nothing but his instruments—men of little note, of respectable private character, of very ordinary abilities, and wholly unacquainted with official business, or even with political life; but they represented Brissot and his party in the Assembly, and that sufficed. It might have been expected that being now in possession of place and power, the Brissotins would have been interested in maintaining and consolidating the royal authority, now their own, and for about three weeks or a month matters went on smoothly, at least in the closet, and we have Madame Roland's evidence that the ministers were perfectly satisfied with the King, and he seemed to be so with them. But the scene very suddenly changed. On the 20th of April the ministers forced the King to consent to the declaration of war against Austria, a measure of Brissot's, and intended more to insult, mortify, and depopularise the Queen than against the Emperor. On the 24th Roland made a violent report soliciting rigorous measures of repression against 'the ambition, the pride, and the avarice of the priests.' This report, warmly supported in the Assembly by Vergniaud, obviously intended to alarm the conscience of the King, and to inflame the passions of the people, was subsequently (24th May) converted into the celebrated decree for the banishment by penal transportation from France of all the clergy who should refuse to take the civic oath.

The next move against the King was of a more practical and decisive nature. The revised constitution had left him a body guard that would have given him at least a chance of personal security and independent action; of this he was now to be deprived. De Grave, the Minister of War, a constitutionalist, who had shown no sympathy with the more Jacobin portion of the Cabinet, Roland and Clavière, was displaced, and Servan, a man of their principles, was appointed; and on a complaint made in the Assembly that the guard had been anti-patriotically selected, it was on the 30th of May abolished, and its commander, the Duc de Brissac, was impeached and imprisoned, and subsequently massacred.

The disorders in Paris had been so notorious and alarming for

the last three months, that this decree left no doubt that the Ministry and the Assembly had made up their minds to proceed to extremities with the King, even to the peril of his person. M. de Girardin, the pupil of Rousseau, a liberal—almost an extreme one—but still a constitutionalist, had the courage, in opposing this decree, to say distinctly that it was the measure of a party that contemplated '*regicide*.' (*Moniteur*, May 31, 1792.)

And here we must for a moment pause to observe another of those instances of the *lex talionis* with which the revolutionary *Nemesis* requited her votaries; this unconstitutional and, as it turned out, bloody decree was proposed and supported with all the zeal, eloquence, and numbers of the Girondins. In a debate which lasted through the night, Vergniaud, Guadet, and La Source particularly distinguished themselves by their rancorous violence. The guard was dismissed without a shadow of justice, and M. de Brissac sent to prison without even the colour of a crime. Well—it was just that day twelvemonth (the 30th of May, 1793) that the sections of Paris were hounded on by Danton and Robespierre against those same Girondins; the barriers were closed, the tocsin rung — they dared not sleep at home; and, next morning, *Vergniaud*, *Guadet*, *La Source*, and the rest, who had sent M. de Brissac to prison, and eventually to the scaffold, for an imaginary crime, were themselves proscribed for crimes almost as groundless, sent to prison, and eventually to the scaffold.

But this dissolution of the King's guard was not enough. The new Minister of War, Servan, without the King's consent, or even knowledge, proposed, and the Assembly decreed, that a federalist army of 20,000 men should be formed in the vicinity of Paris; this army was to be raised from the provinces—that is, selected by the Jacobin clubs all over France; and we need not say would have made short work with the monarch. This, however, was a step as yet too bold. The National Guard, who, before the dissolution of the Constitutional Guard, had more especially had the service of the palace and about the King's person, were offended at being thus superseded, and a violent opposition to the decree was made, not only by those who were of royalist or moderate opinions, but by many revolutionists to the former decrees against the priests; and petitions were presented to the King, requesting him to oppose his constitutional *Veto*, and not to sanction the decree. The Council-General of the Depart-

ment of Paris, composed of eminent constitutionalists, the Duke de la Rochefoucault, Talleyrand, &c., also petitioned the King to oppose his *Veto*. Those two decrees equally affected the King; the first, as it abrogated his constitutional authority over the army, and endangered his personal safety; while the second alarmed his conscience and his duty to the ministers of religion.* And from the heat and obstinacy with which they were urged on the King, it seems as if the ministers had selected them for the purpose of forcing him to exercise his *Veto*—a term already unpopular and of bad omen, and which they designed to make the watchword of an insurrection, as it had been once before.

As early as August, 1789, in the debates on the first Constitution, the negative of the Sovereign on the acts of the Legislative body, designated by the term *Veto*, was vehemently opposed by the revolutionists, and it became the signal of a violent conflict of parties, and indeed of principles. It was evident to all that if the Legislature were to be a single chamber, and the Sovereign were to have no negative on its proceedings, such a Legislature must be despotic, and such a Sovereign a puppet. All, therefore, who really wished for a balance of power in the constitution and for any semblance of a Monarchy, insisted on this controlling, or rather moderating, *drag* on the impetus of the popular Assembly. The Revolutionists, on the contrary, and especially the Orleanists, desiring nothing short of the deposition of Louis XVI., were, of course, anxious to deprive him of any constitutional means of defence, and endeavoured, by their usual incendiary practices, to intimidate the Assembly into the rejection of the Veto. Street orators, placard-newspapers, incendiary ballads were all employed to exasperate the populace, who knew and cared so little about the real object against which they were invited to clamour and revolt, that contemporary writers have thought it worth while to preserve some specimens of the popular interpretations of the meaning of this term. In one circle it was denounced as a speculation to '*raise the price of sugar*;'† in another, as a plot of the Queen to smuggle French money to her brother. An alarmist assured his audience that it was a power in the King and his ministers to '*hang whom they pleased*;' while a soberer reasoner thus expounded it: '*Do you know what the Veto*

* See ante p. 88, Madame Campan's account of this crisis.

† It happened that there really was about the time a great increase in the price of sugar.

means?' '*No, not I.*' '*Then I'll tell you. If you have your porringer full of soup, and the King tells you to spill it, spill it you must—that's all.*'* Even M. Thiers admits that the people 'supposed the *Veto* to be a *tax* which they might get rid of, or some *anti-revolutionist* who ought to be hanged.'† Our readers may, at first sight, be surprised at the unwonted candour of M. Thiers in thus confessing the ignorance and imposture by which at this, as well as at every subsequent stage, the revolution was hurried forward; but they will see that this admission of the folly and crimes of the populace is only one of his many devices to keep out of sight and out of blame the real authors and instigators of all these disorders.

The factitious tumult excited in Paris by this question, though it did not altogether succeed in its immediate object, had most serious consequences. Mirabeau and the Orleanists, who reckoned on having, by-and-by, a king of their own choice, were not willing to leave him totally powerless, but being at the same time anxious to preserve their popularity, they made a distinction, and instead of a *final*, proposed a *suspensive Veto*—that the King should not absolutely reject, but only delay the execution of a decree, which, after a certain interval, was to have the full force of law. This compromise was accepted (12th September, 1789) in the Assembly, still sitting at Versailles, by 663 votes for the *suspensive*, against 325 for the *absolute* Veto. But the agitation in Paris was not, nor was it intended to be, appeased; it only received a new and more culpable direction. While the question was still pending, an attempt was made to rouse the Paris mob to a march to Versailles, to intimidate the Assembly into the total rejection of the *Veto*, and to insist on the removal of the Royal Family to Paris. But they were stopped by the occupation of the bridge of Sèvres by the troops; and the passing of the decree, on the 12th September, removed the *pretence* for this movement. But the real object—an attack on the King—remained, and burst out in full force in the decisive outrage of the 5th and 6th October, which extinguished the Monarchy, though not its name.

Such were the cause and consequence of the first *Veto* question in the autumn of 1789, which will tend to explain the spirit in

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* Bertrand de Moleville, ii. 14. † Thiers, ii. 118.

which it was revived in the spring of 1792, when, from a strong conscientious sense of duty, and no doubt encouraged by the disapprobation with which the decrees about the army and the priests had been received by the National Guard and Council General of the Department, the King resolved to exercise this constitutional right against the two decrees, and of course to dismiss the three ministers—Servan, Roland, and Clavière—who so wantonly and so insultingly persisted in forcing them on him.

It seems very hard to account for the proceedings of the ministers and the Brissotin party in this whole affair. They had attained their first object—place and power; and though they were certainly hostile to the King's person, and probably to monarchy in the abstract, and designed the ultimate destruction of both, they might have been expected to be for a time satisfied with their success, and to have endeavoured to consolidate and maintain it. But instead of this we see both the ministers in their cabinet; and their leaders, Brissot, Vergniaud, and Guadet, in the Assembly, raising rash questions and promoting anarchical agitations, which, however certain to be ultimately destructive of the King's authority, were likely, for the moment, to risk their own.

All the notice M. Thiers takes of this political phenomenon is, that 'the Gironde, finding itself no longer mistress of Louis XVI., since Dumouriez had obtained a greater influence over him, returned to its old part (rôle) of violent opposition.' This explanation is evidently futile. It was Dumouriez's influence that brought them into the government, and he remained in office but three days after them;* and however natural it would have been to return to their rôle of *opposition* when they were *out*,

* Dumouriez's own conduct was at this period so versatile that we cannot quite credit, if indeed we completely understand, his own account of his motives; and we cannot but think that some of his statements—for instance, as to the new Garde du Roi—are coloured and exaggerated to excuse the inconsistency of his own conduct, both in permitting its dissolution, and in his subsequent efforts to force the King to sanction the decree of the 20,000. I knew him well in his latter years, and liked the man, and loved to talk with him of those revolutionary scenes; but he never was able, nor indeed I think very anxious, to explain the contradictory incidents of his short ministerial career. I remained persuaded that his ambition had led him to undertake a responsibility which he found more perilous than he expected; and that, having by his presumption led the King into greater difficulties, he very suddenly and shabbily abandoned him, and secured himself for a time in the command of the army, where his successes and personal glory only served to accelerate the catastrophe of his unfortunate master, and to delay for a few months his own proscription and exile.—1855.

there appears no motive for their taking violent opposition measures while they were *in* government; and it, moreover, is certain that though Dumouriez neither approved the decrees, nor, above all, the surreptitious way in which that about the army was introduced, he exerted all his influence, and in fact went much further than he could justify, in endeavouring to induce the King to sanction the decrees. That a dislike of Dumouriez entered into the motives of his Brissotins is very likely; but it was, we think, in a very different way from what M. Thiers supposes. The motives are, we admit, a mystery at which we can only guess: but our conjecture is, that we must look for its solution to the influence of two persons whose share in the transactions have never yet been sufficiently indicated—*Madame Roland* and *Robespierre*.

It is evident, from the extreme zeal and anxiety that Madame Roland shows about these two decrees, and the active though secret part she took in the affair, that she was a chief mover in it; that she even forced it on her reluctant husband. But this still leaves us to inquire why, not satisfied with such a *sudden* and prodigious elevation in political importance as no woman, from the ordinary ranks of society, had ever before attained, she should have been desirous of breaking up an administration and overthrowing a government in which she had so extraordinary an influence. Was her ambition still unsatiated?—was her vanity offended by the obscurity of her power; or was she really a republican enthusiast, nursed in the *tyrannicide* doctrines of antiquity? We suspect that she was influenced by all these motives. The last, which would seem *à priori* the least probable in a female mind, is however the best averred. That, at the very dawn of the revolution, she contemplated—nay, advocated—the murder on the scaffold, or by assassination, of the King and Queen, is proved by the following passage of a letter of the 26th July, 1789, to her friend and editor Bosc, who had announced to her, then at her husband's farm in Burgundy, the capture of the Bastille, and the scenes that followed it:—

'You are busying yourselves with appointing municipalities, and you are permitting the escape of certain *heads* that are only preparing new atrocities against you. You are mere children; your enthusiasm is nothing better than a blaze of straw; and if the National Assembly does not proceed seriously and regularly to the

trial of two illustrious heads, or if some generous *Decius* does not risk his life *to take theirs*, you are all—*undone.*'—*Appel*, P. iv. p. 130.*

And this is enforced by a gross *obscenity*, which we are astonished that the pen of her editor ventured to transcribe; ours cannot.

In the same spirit, as early as the 4th September, 1789, she seems to suggest, prophetically, the very outrages of the 6th October and of the 20th June.

'I have no doubt that half your National Assembly has been stupid (*bête*) enough to be touched (*attendri*) at the sight of Antoinette presenting them her son. *Morbleu!*—a fine time to be thinking of a child when the salvation of twenty-five millions of men is at stake!'—*Ib.* 134.

It seems really wonderful that these prophetic anticipations of the spirit that developed itself on the 5th and 6th of October, on the 20th of June, on the 10th of August, and in the murder of the King and Queen, should have been written only twelve days after the taking of the Bastille, and just a month before the first of these events, by an obscure woman, in a farm in Burgundy, and who did not, till a year and a half later, come to Paris and see any of the persons or parties whose ideas she thus forestalled, and whose movements she afterwards directed, in perfect consistence it must be admitted, with her first impressions. Whatever else, therefore, may be said of this extraordinary woman, we cannot deny her the merit of sincerity and consistency, and of being one of the few, the very few, who adopted the violence of the revolution without any object of personal interest, or, at first, of ambition; for at the date of these letters it is impossible that she should have dreamed she was destined to take any part in public affairs; it is even doubtful whether she could have expected ever again to revisit her native metropolis. She was, therefore, very likely to have used her influence to bring about any crisis which she might think calculated to accelerate the downfall of the throne and the advent of the republic, on which her imagination had been nourishing itself ever since her childhood.

But ambition soon supervened. She had indeed the tact and

* It is a striking, but by no means singular, instance of the fraud and bad faith in which French writers deal with their revolutionary history, that in the 'Collection of Mémoires' by Messrs. Berville and Barrière, which profess the utmost candour and impartiality, the two important passages in the text are wholly omitted. We copy them from Bosc's original edition, published by Louvet in 1795.

good taste to profess that she shut herself up in the modest privacy of her sex and condition, and whenever she was led or provoked to speak in private or public of her husband, it was always with an effusion of respect and deference, which—perhaps sincerely felt and at all events exquisitely acted—while it veiled to the world, really increased that secret influence which she loved and exercised. When she and her husband returned to Paris in February, 1791, in a very private, we might almost say humble condition, and made acquaintance with Brissot, Pétion, and their friends, including Robespierre, and by her mental and in no small degree her personal attractions, contrived to collect the most eminent of the party about her—

'It was even arranged that they should come four evenings in the week to my apartments, because I loved a sedentary life, and happened to have good lodgings,* in the neighbourhood of all those who composed my little salon—*ce petit comité.*'—*Appel*, i. 37.

She was naturally proud of this homage from men the most considerable in reputation and popularity. *Elle savourait son ivresse*, and was so jealous of any defalcation or absence on the part of her votaries, that the first symptoms that we trace of that fatal conflict that ended in the mutual ruin and murder of all the parties, is her complaint that Robespierre—*qu'elle avait beaucoup aimé*—grew less assiduous 'à ses petits comités,' and less tractable when he did attend them. When a few months later she became so suddenly and unexpectedly the lady of a minister—we might almost say first minister—we can see, through the moderation which the gloom of the Conciergerie and the near prospect of the guillotine † would have inspired, even if her own good taste had not, that her pretensions became more decided and *exigeantes*. ‡

* Hôtel Britannique, Rue Guénegaud, near the south end of the Pont Neuf.

† It is easy to see that she was a hard-hearted as well as a strong-headed woman, but her own adversity and dangers moderated, if they did not much soften, her less amiable feelings; and we read her Memoirs under the charm which compassion for her fate adds to the natural graces of her style and the vigour of her understanding.

‡ We are tempted to give one delicate touch of her self-confidence. *Pache*, afterwards minister of war and mayor of Paris, was originally brought forward by her, and became a kind of under-secretary of state to Roland. She gives him the highest character as a man of business. He 'was amiable in his appearance, gentle in his manner, diligent in business, discreet, zealous, doing his duty perfectly—always hitting the right point of a discussion—and moderating by his good sense and good temper the hasty irritations which Roland sometimes exhibited.' But it seems he had the pretension of attempting to write despatches—'but his style,' she adds, 'was dry and flat, and moreover it was not in that line that he was wanted—*on n'avoit pas besoin de lui sous*

It is, however, very unlikely that her political friends should have been driven to such extreme measures as they adopted, either by her republican enthusiasm, or even her *amour propre blessé*; some of them were needy adventurers, all ambitious demagogues, who would be little inclined to risk the high position they had attained for any abstract theory of government, or even for the chances of a new lottery in which they could hardly expect to draw greater prizes.

'You have,' says Robespierre, in one of his answers to Brissot's attacks, 'you have got rid of certain old ministers, but you have filled their places with your own friends. It must be confessed that your patriotism is not without its little consolations. All the world sees the publicity—the ridiculous ostentation—with which you dispose of all the offices and employments in the country among your own creatures.'—(*Défenseur*, No. 3.)

Why then did the Brissotins, when they had been but a month in power, volunteer to pick a quarrel—it evidently was deliberately planned—with the King, and force him to dismiss them? We have just said, that much as they were devoted to Madame Roland, her mere personal jealousies could hardly have affected them so deeply; but there is a circumstance revealed by Dumouriez which has been hitherto little noticed, but which connects, in a remarkable manner, Madame Roland's feelings with the general interests of the party. Dumouriez, who, as we have seen, had formed this cabinet, and was, in fact, though not titularly, first minister, tells us:

'At first the six ministers went on very well together—(*vivaient en bonne intelligence*). They agreed to dine together on council days, that is three times a week, at each other's house in turn. They brought their portefeuilles, and to prevent any difference amongst themselves in the King's closet, previously discussed in detail the measures in each department that they were to propose, so that they should have but one common opinion. That lasted *about a month*, at the end of which Roland insisted that when the dinner should be at his house, *his wife and his friends* should be of the party. Dumouriez and Lacoste, after having in vain protested against this ridi-

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ce rapport. Pache, who was ambitious, and affected disinterestedness, would receive no salary, and was of course mortified at being subjected to the hand that would receive no assistance. Deadly enmity ensued, and Pache had a large share in the overthrow and ruin of the Brissotins, whom he soon eclipsed in popularity and succeeded in office.

culous innovation, agreed that they would no longer bring their official portefeuilles to these dinners. This was a device of the Girondins to get into the management of affairs, and to govern the government. They were therefore very angry with the two dissentient ministers.'—*Dum. Mém.* ii. 174.

Madame Roland relates the same story, but so managed, however, as to veil her own share in it, and to make it appear rather as a single incident than as part of a systematic encroachment; but even under her embroidery we can trace the substantial justice of Dumouriez's complaint. When describing the subsequent rupture of Dumouriez and his colleagues, she says that Dumouriez had 'un petit déplaisir à venger,' and she goes on to explain the petit déplaisir to have been this: Dumouriez had very naturally and very prudently named to a confidential place in his department, M. de Bonne-Carrère, an old friend and brother officer—a gentleman of distinguished services, both military and diplomatic, and whose knowledge, experience, and ability, Madame Roland confesses that no one could deny. But he had, it seems, in some way incurred the enmity of Brissot, who affected to doubt his probity, and to suspect him of aristocratical tendencies. These there is every reason to believe are mere calumnies, to colour Brissot's personal hatred, which was so strong that, after the 10th of August, when Brissot was all-powerful, he had Bonne-Carrère arrested, and would have sacrificed him at the Revolutionary Tribunal, but that Robespierre stepped in and sent Brissot to the guillotine before he could reach his intended victim. Madame Roland's version of the affair is, that Dumouriez having dined one day at Roland's, with herself, Brissot, Gensonné, and several other deputies—

'Brissot and Gensonné, *as had been previously concerted*, remonstrated with Dumouriez on the appointment of Bonne-Carrère, and that Roland, with the gravity and authority of his character, enforced the observations of his friends—that Dumouriez at first treated this interference lightly, but at last, when they further pressed him, expressed his dissatisfaction more seriously, and withdrew; from that time he kept at a distance from those deputies, and was not pleased at meeting them at my house, where he became a less frequent visitor.'—*Appel*, ii. 16.

This statement sufficiently confirms that of Dumouriez, and fully justifies his resistance to the introduction of these secret and

irresponsible advisers. But it was only a natural consequence of the absurdity of the constitution, which rendered the crown and its ministers mere instruments of one overbearing popular assembly.

Incapacitated as they were by law from being themselves in office, it was, as Robespierre sneeringly told them, but poor consolation to Brissot, Guadet, Vergniaud, and those who were called the statesmen, to have placed their subordinates in office, if their own ambition was not to be gratified by a real and substantial share in the government of which they were the creators, patrons, and protectors. This attempt the resistance of Dumouriez and his constitutional colleagues defeated; and without knowing or even guessing at the details of the intrigues and projects of the Brissotine faction, we can see that they had a strong motive for breaking up the ministry, but they must also have felt that they must do so on some pretence more decent, and above all more popular, than the usurpation they had in the first instance attempted.

This explanation, so probable in itself, is strongly corroborated by the unerring evidence of the chronology of the events. Madame Roland says the *bonne intelligence* of the ministers lasted *three* weeks—Dumouriez says about four; they came into office in the middle of March, and it was just one month later that the ministry made its first overt aggression on the King, in the decree against the priests, followed by that rapid succession of frauds and outrages which we have already noticed, and which deserve a much more minute and careful development than any writer that we know of has yet given them, or than we have space or means to attempt.

One consideration, however, which has been almost if not wholly unnoticed, seems to us so important to the history of this critical period, that we think it necessary to state and examine it—we mean the rivalry between the Brissotins and Robespierre, which had, we believe, a very powerful though collateral and obscure influence on the Brissotine policy.

Without too far anticipating what will be found in a future Essay on the career and character of Robespierre, we must here remind our readers, that being, as well as all his colleagues of the Constituant, and their successors in the Legislative, Assemblies, incapacitated from the succeeding legislature, and from political office, he had retired to a considerable legal office, *Accusateur Public* of the Criminal Tribunal of Paris, of which Pétion was

president. When his old friends the Brissotins began to exercise their influence in the distribution of offices, and especially when Pétion had been advanced to be Mayor of Paris, really the most important office in the state, and another president put over Robespierre's head, he seems to have become not unreasonably dissatisfied with that subordinate position, and resigned it some time towards the close of February or beginning of March, 1792, even before he entered on its functions, deeply offended no doubt at the neglect or indifference of his former friends, and the elevation of men certainly far behind him in services to the revolutionary cause. Here again we trace the influence of Madame Roland, whose complaints of Robespierre, and his finally absenting himself from the coterie, we have already referred to. Being thus out of both office and the Assembly, he devoted all his thoughts, time, and activity to the Jacobin Club, which, under his influence and guidance, became a rival to the Assembly itself, and from the tribune of which he waged a formidable war against the Brissotin party and their measures; and on the accession of the Brissotin cabinet in March, 1792, Robespierre's hostility became so decided and so serious, that Brissot and Guadet, the leaders of the party in the Assembly, found it expedient to descend from their legislative dignity, and to meet Robespierre on his own ground in the Jacobin Club. The attempt was unsuccessful. They were defeated, outvoted, and expelled; the war between the parties assumed a more rancorous and implacable character.

Whether Robespierre, thus master of the Jacobins and of the Parisian mob, had at this period any design against the Brissotins, such as he excited the following spring, we know not; but we think it probable. It is certain that the agitations which afterwards took the shape of insurrection against the Veto, existed and had become formidable a month or six weeks before the decrees that raised the Veto question were thought of; and there is another circumstance not hitherto, that we know of, noticed, that tends to a suspicion that something was intended long anterior to the 20th June. The first indication that we find of any such movement is that, under the colour of an ancient and loyal custom, the people designed to testify their respect to the King by planting *Un Mai**—

* *Arbre qu'on a coupé et qu'on plante au premier jour de Mai, devant la porte de quelqu'un pour lui faire honneur.— Dict. de l'Académie.*

an honorary May-bush—on the garden-terrace of the Tuileries. This proceeding—that would have equally involved (as the 20th June subsequently did) the Assembly and the palace in the same danger—must have been intended for the *1st of May*, but when that day had (we know not why) gone by without the intended demonstration, the Jacobite journals still adhered to the pretext, but, as a more epigrammatic insult, proposed that the tree to be planted should be a *tremble* (an aspen).

But whatever may have been Robespierre's secret designs, the Brissotins must have seen from his public conduct that they had no prospect of maintaining their power but by outbidding the Jacobins in revolutionary violence. This; or perhaps a hope of saving their lives, which they did but for a year, forced Robespierre into something that looked like moderation. He opposed the Austrian war, which the ministry had forced the King to declare; and some time in May he began a periodical paper, which he called *Le Défenseur de la Constitution*—a constitution which he had never ceased to attack and vilify; but seeing clearly that the ministry, by the pressure they were exercising on the King, and by their arrogance in the Assembly, were setting it at defiance, he adopted the same policy that M. Thiers afterwards adopted against Charles X. (*antè*, p. 20), of endeavouring to confine his antagonists within the four corners of a constitution inexecutable in itself, and which no party had the slightest respect for, except only the poor King, whose unfortunate position was aggravated by the ridicule of being calumniated as the betrayer of a constitution of which he was the only conscientious observer and Robespierre the only *defender*.

The Brissotin party, though they had a majority in the Assembly and possession of the Government, could not but see the necessity of having in their hands a military force in Paris, to counterbalance the royal guard on one side, and to master the populace—which was still under the same Orleanist organization that had raised and directed all the former *émeutes*—on the other. Perhaps also they foresaw, what soon after happened, that they were in peril from Lafayette and his army. This object naturally explains the two measures of depriving the King of his guard, and of collecting a federalist army in Paris, to be formed of regiments raised in each department, and of course independently of the local influences of Paris or of the military prestige of

Lafayette. We do not know when *exactly* this idea of a federalist army occurred to the Brissotins; but we have now little doubt that it arose from, and was intended to defeat, a design which Robespierre seems to have formed of having an army of his own.

We find in the very first number of the '*Défenseur*' a proposition for calling out from their retirement, to garrison Paris, 60,000 old soldiers, veteran *patriots*, who had been persecuted, degraded, and at length 'arbitrarily dismissed by the military and ministerial aristocracy which had so long tyrannised over the army.' The numbers of the '*Défenseur*' are not dated, but this one must have been published about the middle of May.* Whether Robespierre by this step intended to anticipate and defeat the secret design of the Ministry, or whether the ministry seized on his suggestion, and varied it to suit their own purpose, we, though we incline to the former opinion, have no means of deciding; but certain it is that, on the 4th June, M. Servan made his celebrated, and to all parties concerned; fatal motion of the federalist army of 20,000 men, which would have differed from those proposed by Robespierre only by being Brissotins instead of Jacobins, a difference which would perhaps have made little or no change in the general march of the Revolution, but was at the time, and *between the parties*, of vital importance. The King being thus disarmed of men, that shadow of protection with which the constitution had invested him, the ministers thought they might safely proceed to outbid their real antagonists, Robespierre and the Jacobins, for mob popularity; they proposed the federalist army to awe both the King and Paris, and they accompanied the proposition by another for the persecution of the Priests, which was to conciliate the mob of Paris, and to drive the King to extre-

* That a periodical paper should have no date seems strange, but so it is. M. Deschiens, in his elaborate catalogue of revolutionary works, dates the first number of the *Défenseur, June* 1792; but it is certain, from a more minute examination, that the first two numbers at least were published in *May*, and that the first appeared within a fortnight or three weeks after the attack of Brissot and Guadet on Robespierre in the Jacobin Club on the 27th April. The absence or uncertainty of dates, so remarkable throughout the great mass of revolutionary publications, is peculiarly vexatious when we have to examine and compare the intrigues and movements of contending parties, in which the *ipsissima dies* is often of the greatest importance: as in the instance mentioned in the text, if M. Deschiens' date were right, Robespierre's proposition of 60,000, and Servan's, on the 4th June, for 20,000, might be simultaneous, or the latter even earlier than the former. But it was certainly some two or three weeks later.

mities. They reckoned, that if the King submitted they were his masters for as long as they chose to keep him as King, and that if he resisted, they had the old odium of the VETO, and a combination of the whole revolutionary party—Orleans, Robespierre, Danton, and all—to get rid of him at once.

But whatever share Robespierre may have had in the original agitation, or however willing he may have been to provoke an insurrection hostile to the monarchy, it is certain that he was not, as M. Thiers states, an instigator or accomplice in the movement of the 20th June.

On the inquiry that was made into this affair, while it was still an object of general reprobation, there appears the deposition of one La Reynie, who states that, at midnight of the 19th, *Robespierre*, Pétion, Manuel, Sillery, and others, met at Santerre's house, in the Faubourg St. Antoine, to arrange and direct the actual movement. This evidence M. Thiers thinks so important that he takes the (with him) very unusual course of producing it *in extenso*, as his authority for stating in his text that,

'considering the known opinions and subsequent conduct of the personages above mentioned [Robespierre, &c.], there is no reason to suppose that they could have any scruple of attending such a meeting.'—ii. 100.

Now this deposition seems on its face altogether worthless. The passages that M. Thiers particularly relies on are of the loosest hearsay:—

'*Deponent knows by the correspondence he has in the Faubourg St. Antoine that the citizens of that faubourg were* travaillé *by Santerre.*'

And again, as to the midnight meeeting, he says that

'*he has had it from witnesses whom he will be able to produce when they return from a mission in the country on which they are now employed*'—

but *who* they were, or *where* or *what* their mission was, not a hint is given, though it would require very precise and authoritative evidence to make us believe that the cautious Robespierre or the timid Pétion were at any such meeting. M. Thiers seems to have been aware of the insufficiency of the evidence, but the argument by which he attempts to support it—namely, the coincidence of Robespierre's opinions and conduct with the object of the insurrection—exhibits a wonderful instance of the levity and inaccuracy

with which he compiled his history. He could not have either consulted the Debates in the Jacobin Club, nor even read Robespierre's own '*Défenseur*,' where he would have found that, during the fortnight that preceded the 20th June, Robespierre distinctly foretold and vehemently denounced the approaching tumult. The ministers were dismissed on the 12th, and on the 13th Robespierre appeared in the tribune of the Club, and in defiance of the insurrectionary spirit of which he had hitherto been the hottest champion, had the bold inconsistency to exclaim—

'You [the Brissotins] that are sounding so loud an alarm, and giving such an impulse to the public mind on the subject of a change of ministry, why do you not employ your power for a more national object? for some object worthy of the French people? If you have grievances, lay them before the National Assembly. No doubt a great country is justified in rising in its own defence, but none but a degraded people can allow itself to be thrown into such agitations for the interests of individuals and the intrigues of a party. It is essential to the very existence of our liberties that we should not be suspected of overturning the state for *so shameful a pretence*—the dismissal of three ministers forsooth—as if the fate of the revolution depended on their elevation or disgrace! . . . But are the services of these ministers so necessary, so indispensable that we have no alternative but to overturn the state? or are we come to such a pass as that a faction may boldly avow the design of overturning the constitution? . . . They endeavour to seduce the agitated and unenlightened crowd by the promise of a freer government, and by the name of a *republic*—but the result of this attack on the constitution will be nothing but the kindling of a civil war which can lead only to *anarchy and despotism*.'

This remarkable speech, which Cazalès or Mounier, or any royalist, might have pronounced, opens a hitherto unexplored view into Robespierre's proceedings; we only quote it here as proving that he had no sympathy with the 20th June. But even some weeks later, when the impunity of the riot had given it the character of success, and that Robespierre found it convenient to adopt its tone and its consequences, he still modestly disclaimed the merit of having had any share in the design:—

'I can,' he says, 'the more freely give my opinion on the result of that movement (*rassemblement*), for my opposition to that proceeding was shown by facts as numerous as notorious.'—*Défenseur*, No. viii.

In the same number of the *Défenseur* * in which this speech is republished is a vehement attack on the ministerial project of the 20,000 men. It is therefore clear that neither in the object nor the execution of this particular insurrection of the 20th June could Robespierre have had any share. He was not only in the most decided hostility to those in whose favour it was made, but there is (as we shall see hereafter) some reason to suspect that he may have been at this moment in secret communication with the court, to which, at all events, he was less hostile than to the Brissotins.

But there is no doubt that except *him* individually—and at this time he seems to have stood alone—the whole revolutionary party, Orleanist, Cordeliers, Jacobins, and Brissotins, whatever difference there might be between their secondary motives, were now and had long been acting together, and with the common and primary object of getting rid of the King, and were only waiting for some plausible occasion or accidental opportunity for an outbreak, which, with all their audacity, they were still afraid to risk without one. The severe lesson that they had received in the Champ de Mars on the 17th July was fresh in their recollection; and though they had got rid of Lafayette and Bailly, and had elected their fellow-conspirator, Pétion, into the office of Mayor, all the other authorities were still constitutionalists, as was also the great majority of the National Guards. It would literally take volumes to exhibit any adequate idea of the multitudinous insults, lies, libels, calumnies,

* To appreciate with any justice those rival factions and their leaders, and indeed the whole of this period of the revolution, we should bear in mind the personal character of this celebrated Brissot; and we cannot find it more shortly or more authentically given, than in the sketches of the panegyrist of the '*Girondins*.' Lamartine says of his hero—'Brissot was the son of a pastrycook; he began by *stealing* the name of Harville, under which he endeavoured to conceal his own. In Paris and in London (to which he found it prudent to retire from some misunderstanding with the French police) he dragged on (*traînait*) a life of penury and vanity in those sewers (*sentines*) of infamy which generate adventurers and pamphleteers. Here he got acquainted with a nest of those libellists whom society rejects—scoundrels of the press (*scélérats de la plume*), who live upon the scandals furnished by vice and the wages of espionage. His contact with these men dishonoured him (*souilla*). He was, or sometimes appeared, their accomplice; and these shameful stains adhered to his whole life.' But, on the other side, M. Lamartine pleads for him, that 'in the midst of those vices which make his probity doubtful and his character suspicious, he nourished in the bottom of his soul three *virtues* capable of redeeming them—a constant affection for a young wife whom he had married in spite of his parents—a love of work—and a courage in meeting the difficulties of life and the terrors of death.' These virtues, as M. Lamartine calls them, might be, and we believe with more certainty, pleaded in favour of *Danton*, *Camille Desmoulins*, *Lebas*, and a crowd of others, even *Hébert* and *Chabot*; but can no more be admitted in extenuation of *their* sanguinary ferocity, than of the meaner infamy of *Brissot*.

and even provocations to murder, with which the public mind was incessantly deluded, perverted, poisoned, and infuriated against the King, his family, his ministers, and all the friends of the constitutional monarchy, till at last the obnoxious *veto*, and the dismissal of the three ministers, afforded a pretext on which the conspirators thought they might venture to act.

We have dwelt the rather on this point because it is doubtless a very remarkable—though hitherto very little remarked—feature of the whole revolution, that *not one, not a single one*, of the tumults which now had its successive stages—from the '*affaire Reveillon*,' to the September massacres—had any real connexion with the pretext under which it was executed. This one of the 20th June was apparently that in which the avowed motive seemed most like a real one, for the *veto* and the dismissal were realities; but it is equally certain that they were merely incidental, and only came in aid of a design long before in preparation, and which had been several times on the point of breaking out on several occasions, and under a variety of pretexts. These occasions, indeed, were so numerous as to be of almost daily occurrence, and the royal family seldom passed twenty-four hours free from the alarm, if not the reality, of danger. One of them is too remarkable to be passed over without a short notice. In the mutiny of the troops in Lorraine in the autumn of 1790, which had been repressed by M. de Bouillé with great energy, and, at the moment, with the universal applause of the King, the Assembly, and even the people, the Swiss regiment of *Châteauvieux* had been prominent in the rebellion and murders. By the treaty with the Swiss Cantons, under which these troops were in the service of France, the trial of military offences was exclusively reserved to the Swiss themselves; and on this occasion about sixty of the mutineers were brought to trial, twenty-four of the most guilty of the mutineers and murderers were condemned to death and executed, and forty-six others were sentenced to the galleys—that is, hard labour—and were transferred to Brest to suffer their punishment. The sentence was received at the time with general approbation; but after the passing of the amnesty on the acceptance of the Constitution the revolutionary party insisted that it should comprise these convicts. That however was not within the power of the King or his Ministers; the sentence had been pronounced under the existing treaties by the Swiss authorities, and by them alone could it be remitted.

Negotiations, however, were opened by M. de Montmorin, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to induce the Cantons to pardon the men. The Cantons, alarmed for the discipline of their armies, hesitated to comply, and it is very probable that the French minister was not very earnest in his advocacy. The affair remained in suspense till the spring of 1792, when the Jacobins, who were looking out for an excuse for the violence they meditated, seized on the case of the convicts—'the patriot victims,' they said, of royal tyranny, and, especially of the oppression and cruelty of the 'traitor Bouillé,' whose share in the King's flight to Varennes, and his subsequent emigration, had now made his name the most odious that could be in any way associated with the royal cause. The Brissotins, not to be outdone by their rivals, took up this incendiary topic in the Assembly, and thus the whole revolutionary party were combined to create an agitation which, if the Government yielded, would encourage and sanction disturbance and mutiny in the army, or, if the King should resist, would afford the desired occasion for the meditated attack on his palace and his person. It is not from mere inference that we connect this Châteauvieux conspiracy with the outbreak of the 20th June,—all the successive circumstances prove the identity of the object and the actors. One will suffice. Manuel, the Procureur-Général, or first legal adviser of the *Commune* of Paris—an officer analogous to the Recorder of London—thundered from the tribune of the Jacobins against the delay of the ministers, and especially of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, in obtaining the consent of the Swiss authorities to the release of the men.

'The time is come,' he exclaimed, 'when we must make an example, and that one man must perish for our general safety: that man must be a minister—no matter which—they are all so guilty, that I believe the Assembly might, with perfect justice, decree that they should draw lots which of them should be sent to the scaffold.'

This *legal adviser* was, as we shall see, only a month later, one of the principal instigators of the 20th June. An insurrection was on the eve of breaking out when the Government yielded, and the storm appeared to blow over for the moment—but not so. The excitement was to be kept up and turned to future account. On their release the convicts were conducted in a kind of triumph to Paris, where still higher honours were announced for them. The mass

of the public, the majority of the Assembly, and in fact every prominent public man who was not deep in the hostile, yet, on this occasion, co-operating, factions of the Jacobins and Brissotins, saw the preparations for this triumph of mutiny and sedition with indignation and alarm. But terror prevailed. The Assembly itself bent under its influence, and decreed, after violent debates, and by a small majority, not only to receive the convicts at its bar, but to admit them to the *honours of the sitting*. But this was not enough —the temporary disgrace which the Assembly submitted to might pass away; the factions combined to give it more prominent consequences. The Constitution forbade the introduction of armed men into the Assembly, but this was an opportunity for setting this as well as all other laws at defiance. The National Guards of all the towns through which the convicts passed had escorted them through their districts, and presented them with tri-coloured flags inscribed with incendiary legends and emblems. Versailles had given them a peculiarly enthusiastic reception, and a detachment of its National Guard had accompanied them to Paris; and on their admission to the Assembly this corps opened the procession, and actually marched through the body of the house with drums beating and colours flying, amidst the vociferations of the Tribunes and the applauses of the members of the factions. They were followed by a great mob of men and women carrying banners and brandishing pikes, and by deputations from all the riotous *Sections* of Paris, and finally by the hordes of the Faubourg St. Antoine, calling themselves, very justly, we believe, the conquerors of the Bastille, and proclaiming that the pikes they carried were only a portion of 10,000 which they had just fabricated for the defence of liberty.

But these inroads on the Assembly were still not enough. The city of Paris decreed a public *fête* in honour of these mutineers and murderers. Of this national *orgie*, which M. Thiers does not choose to describe, we shall, to avoid a suspicion of misrepresentation on our parts, extract the account given by the panegyrist of the Girondists, who were forward not merely in promoting but exciting it.

'It was no longer the cause of liberty but of anarchy, and the 13th April united all its symbols. It celebrated an armed defiance of the law—it awarded a triumph to mutiny;—a colossal *galley*, the emblem of crime and shame, was gaily crowned with wreaths and flowers. Prostitutes, collected from the lowest sinks of debauch,

carried in uplifted hands, and kissed, like religious reliques, the patibulary irons of the convicts—forty trophies bore the names of the forty murderers, and civic crowns surmounted the names of these forty. The busts of Voltaire, Rousseau, Franklin, Sidney—of the philosophers and patriots, were degraded by the association of the busts of those ignoble idols, who followed their images in person, apparently much astonished, and even ashamed of the worship they received. Around them were grouped, as an additional incentive to insubordination and desertion, the mutineers of the old GARDES FRANÇAISES, who had abandoned their colours and their duty in the earlier days of the Revolution. Then came a car, with a statue of Liberty, armed with a club, the type of the future massacres, and the volume of the constitution was paraded to do homage to its violation. Then followed mobs of men and women with a forest of pikes, and cries of vengeance: at certain spots—the Bastille—the Grève—the Champ de Mars—the altar de la patrie—halts were made, where, in derision of the ceremony of *stations* [in the Roman Catholic Church], incendiary hymns were sung, and indecent choruses, to the tune of the Carmagnole, were vociferated, accompanied by the music of the theatres, while immense and disorderly circles of men and women danced tumultuously round the car of Liberty, interchanging fraternal embraces, that had less of patriotism than obscenity; and finally, to crown all, there were Pétion the mayor of Paris, and the whole body of the magistrates of the people, sanctioning, by their official presence, the triumphal insults to decency and law. Such was this fête of the 15th April, 1792—a humiliating parody of the great Federation of the 14th July. France was astonished and ashamed—honest men were terrified—the National Guards began to fear that forest of pikes—the city grew alarmed at the faubourgs, and the army recognised the signal of a complete and general disorganization.'—l. x. c. 20.

Such was this scene which M. Thiers does not choose to notice, with the obviously dishonest motive of concealing facts which so clearly indicated the conspiracy which produced the 20th of June and the 10th of August, and effectually disprove the main object of his whole history—the laying to the blame of the innocent Court outrages which it had not even provoked by indiscretion, or even accident. Before we proceed to exhibit the connexion between this preliminary demonstration with those of June and August, we cannot refrain from saying a few words of the person who played the principal part in it, though we believe under the guidance of Robespierre. This was one Collot (d'Herbois), who, having tried his fortune as a strolling player in the provinces with little success, became a

kind of *littérateur*, and acquired some notice and popularity by the publication of a little patriotic manual, called *L'Almanach du Père Gérard*—something in the style of Franklin's *Poor Richard*. This procured his admission to the Jacobin Club, where he distinguished himself by a certain facility of delivery derived from his old profession, and by the violence with which such a person might be expected to take the Revolutionary fever. He seems to have more particularly attached himself to Robespierre, and the interest which this latter took, both in his speeches and writings in the affair of Châteauvieux and in support of Collot, satisfies us that it was one of those moves by which Robespierre—shut out from the Assembly—hoped to increase the popularity of the Jacobins at the expense of the Brissotins and, in this particular instance, of Lafayette, against whom he, in terms, declared that it was specially directed. But while this affair was on the tapis there happened one of the most incredible facts of those wonderful times. They were forming the Brissotin, or, as it was called, Jacobin Ministry. Louvet, we are told, proposed as *Minister of Justice*—really the highest and most delicate office in the state—the Great Seal of France—Louvet, a young man, said to have been nominally an advocate—which is doubtful, at least his name is not to found in any of the lists of the profession; and certain it is that he never appeared as a professional man, and was only known as the author of the licentious novel of 'Faublas,' in which it was supposed that he described some of the adventures of his own dissolute life. M. Thiers, in relating this extravagant proposal, seems to see no other reason why it should have failed than the '*envious* opposition of Robespierre.' It is pretty certain that Robespierre was amicably consulted on the construction of that Cabinet, and his opposition must have been only minatory; and we should have been inclined to attribute it to common sense and decency rather than to *envy*, but that we find in Prudhomme that Robespierre had himself proposed a rival candidate for that same office—the protector of the convict Swiss, the stroller Collot! All this seems incredible; but the candidature of the two men for that great office seems as well authenticated as any fact of that strange period, and it seems to have had important public consequences, and to afford an explanation of the deadly hatred of Louvet against Robespierre, and the still more fatal enmity of Collot against the Girondins. We suspect that Louvet was a nomination of Madame Roland's;

but it, as well as that of Collot, was too scandalous to be made the avowed cause of a breach between the parties; and the Girondins, properly so called—that is, Vergniaud, Guadet, &c.—interposed, and ended the contention by the choice of M. Duranthon, a lawyer of Bourdeaux, wholly unknown and unheard of in Paris, whom they sent for post-haste, and who, though Madame Roland —angry at his appointment, and still more so at his conduct in office—describes him as of mean abilities and weak character, seems to have been a sensible and honest man; whose conduct during his short and difficult ministry was respectful to the King, conciliatory towards his colleagues, and more becoming the great station into which he was so unexpectedly transported, than could have been *à priori* expected from a provincial lawyer, chosen only as an alternative between either a *Faublas* or a *Ragotin.**

This scandalous success, while it deprived the conspirators of one pretext, only encouraged them to look for others; and led, by an easy transition, to the complicated agitations that at last found a vent on the 20th of June. This day—the anniversary of the *Serment du Jeu de Paume*—was chosen, according to the usual tactics of the agitators, because it afforded a kind of excuse for a popular demonstration, and acting, as they did throughout the whole revolution, on Montesquieu's aphorism, *celui qui assemble le peuple l'émeut*, they always contrived to collect the populace for some apparently innocent object, in order to lead them subsequently to a guilty one; but on this occasion, the circumstances of the Veto and the dismissal of the Ministers, either by accident, or perhaps, as we have hinted, by the design of the Ministers themselves, came in aid of, and in fact almost superseded, the original pretence.

Besides the Jacobins and the Cordeliers and their satellite clubs, the *Commune* or Common Council, and the assemblies of the 48 *Sections*, all of which were a kind of debating societies, where, however, the only debate was who should preach the most wild and furious incendiarism,—besides, we say, these public hotbeds of rebellion, there were of course secret committees, '*conciliabules*,' for directing in detail the violences which the former excited. We

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* So, indeed, Roucher designated Collot at the moment of his Châteauvieux triumph. 'Ce personnage de *Roman Comique* qui des tréteaux de Polichinelle a sauté sur la tribune des Jacobins.'

know that these *conciliabules* were at work, especially in the Faubourgs St. Antoine and St. Marceau, during the whole spring, and by them had been projected, and for some unascertained cause postponed, the 'planting the May' before mentioned. Early in June, probably before the dismissal of the ministers, this project was revived in a conciliabule held at the house of Santerre, the brewer commandant of the National Guard of the Faubourg St. Antoine, with the alteration of the '*May*,' which had become out of season, into a *tree of liberty*—and this was to have been combined with the presentation of a petition to the Assembly and the King '*relatives aux circonstances*.' It will be observed that to cloak and facilitate the real object, the Assembly was put in the foreground, and in order to give the movement an air of legality, an application was made to the *Commune* for the permission (required by law) for a public meeting of the petitioners *with their arms*. This was on the 15th. On the 16th, the common council, which was not yet wholly perverted, rejected the petition, but by a small and hesitating majority, on the ground that the law forbade *any assemblage in arms except of the public force*. This decision the petitioners openly declared that they would set at defiance. Pétion, at once the chief magistrate and chief conspirator, equally reluctant to impede the insurrection or to incur the personal responsibility of permitting it, appealed with his usual double-faced policy to the higher authority of the Council General of the Department. This body, composed of respectable and constitutional magistrates, with Rœderer as their legal adviser, confirmed the decision of the Commune, and directed a proclamation to be issued and placarded, forbidding the proposed assemblage, and calling on the inferior magistrates and the National Guards to prevent it. Pétion, however, remonstrated; he stated that the people and many of the National Guards were determined on the attempt, and that '*no power on earth should prevent it*;' but he proposed as an expedient that would at once gratify the people and satisfy the law, that the National Guard should officially accompany the petitioners, who might march in their ranks and constitute what would thus become such a *public force* as would satisfy the law. This insidious proposition was made, at midnight of the 19th, and was probably made so late in the hope that there might not be time to answer it. But Rœderer, who was at this time in apparent concurrence with his constitutional colleagues of the

department, assembled them in the night, and they at once rejected the expedient, which would obviously have been not merely an illusory insult to the law, but an attempt to enlist the '*public force*' in the intended outrage and secure its safety and success. At five o'clock in the morning of the 20th, Pétion renewed the proposition and received a confirmation of its rejection; but by this time the active parties were already collecting their forces on the Place de la Bastille, determined to make their attempt, and Santerre and Alexandre, commanders of the Faubourgs St. Antoine and St. Marceau, brought out detachments of their own battalions and were joined by several other bodies of National Guards to encourage and protect, and eventually, as we shall see, assist in the sedition; which, indeed, was so far from being the zealous or even spontaneous movement of an excited people, that it was with considerable difficulty and direct assurances of impunity that the subaltern and local agitators were encouraged to risk the attempt. In the last *conciliabule* held in the faubourgs during the night of the 19th, the apostate monk Chabot, a Dantonist—that is Orleanist—found it necessary to stimulate their courage by a speech which concluded—'*My friends, the National Assembly expects you to-morrow, without fail, and with open arms;*' and though the assemblage began at five o'clock in the morning, it was not till eleven o'clock that 1500 of a mob—including spectators—were assembled, and even then they could not be induced to march till Santerre put himself at the head of some *invalide* soldiers whom he had collected in his own premises and invited the mob to follow him by an assurance that '*the National Guards*' (of which he himself was one of the six commanders) '*would not oppose them, and that, moreover, M. Pétion would be there—serait là.*' Thus encouraged, the march began about noon, preceded by the tree of liberty, with the music and cannon of the two faubourgs, and battalions of National Guards, and as it proceeded through the heart of the city was swelled by the population of the successive localities till at its arrival at the Assembly it amounted to many thousands—Rœderer says 20,000,* but Rœderer

* We may be pretty confident that the number never exceeded 8000, as we find that when they insolently demanded of the Assembly to be admitted to present their petition, they announced *in terrorem* that they were 8000. Rœderer, as we have said, for an object of his own, carried it up to 20,000. Lamartine says that they were already 20,000 before they marched from the Place de la Bastille; and both he and Thiers reckon them at 30,000

had, *when he wrote*, an object in magnifying the number. At that period, however, he seems to have been stanch to his duty, and before the procession could arrive, he hastened with his colleagues of the Directory to the bar of the Assembly and apprised them in a vigorous speech of the approaching invasion—he denounced the obvious illegality of the proceeding, and the deeper criminality of the ulterior design, and concluded by telling the Assembly that it was their own former acquiescence in admitting armed bodies to their sittings that had suggested the present outrage and deprived the magistracy of the power of resisting it. If the leaders of the Assembly had not been accomplices of the insurrection, this warning and remonstrance from the most respectable as well as the highest municipal authority, composed of men whose patriotism could not be doubted—friends of the revolution, but of the constitution also—must have been successful; but the infamy of the coalition which concurred in this movement can hardly be more strongly indicated than by the fact that, as it had been instigated by *Chabot*, it was now defended and protected by *Vergniaud!* Rœderer's speech had made so much impression that the most eloquent and authoritative orator of the Gironde thought it necessary and was not ashamed to associate himself with the dregs of the Jacobins. He could not deny Rœderer's facts or inferences, but he pleaded that the Assembly having on preceding occasions—(we now see the importance of the Châteauvieux precedent)—admitted men in arms, it would now be ungracious to the people of Paris and discouraging to the spirit of patriotism to refuse to receive the present well-intentioned and well-behaved petitioners, who were peaceably exercising what they believed, though perhaps somewhat erroneously, to be a constitutional right. This flimsy argument was easily disposed of by Calvet Ramond and Dumolard, but there was a stronger one to which they had no reply—the petitioners grew impatient and decided the question by forcibly bursting into the hall. This, however, was too

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when they reached the Assembly. These are not mere mistakes, but exaggerations adopted with a double motive—first, to make the mob pass for the *people*; and secondly, to excuse the pusillanimity with which the Assembly quailed under a sedition by no means general, and which might have been easily suppressed. But M. Thiers confesses that a portion of the Assembly looked on the rioters as auxiliaries; and so they indubitably were, and *hired* auxiliaries too!

much, for the Girondin majority, factious and frightened as they were, had not yet thrown off all constitutional decency, and the intruders were persuaded to retire from the hall, on a promise that their original demand should be complied with, and that the whole procession should be admitted to file off through the Hall, with their drums, music, arms, and emblems,—*on recule pour mieux sauter!* We shall copy M. Thiers' mitigated account of the scene that followed:—

'*On se figure facilement*,' he says, 'tout ce que peut produire l'imagination d'un peuple livré à lui-même.'

This exordium is in M. Thiers' usual deceptive style. Instead of its being '*easy to imagine*,' his own description shows that nothing could be *more difficult to imagine* than the scenes that these *petitioners* exhibited—but the object of the paradox was to create an impression that the preconcerted and elaborate enormities of this hired and disciplined mob might be in some degree excusable as the natural errors of a *people* accidentally excited and yielding to their own impulses. But it must be admitted that his narrative sufficiently contradicts the inference of its prologue:—

'The march was opened by enormous banners spread out, and inscribed with the declaration of the RIGHTS OF MAN. Women and children danced round these banners, carrying in one hand olive-branches, and in the other pikes, *emblems of peace or war as the enemy might choose*, and singing in reiterated choruses the famous "*Ça ira*"—then came the *forts de la Halle* (porters) and workmen of all classes, with bad guns, swords, and pieces of iron pointed or sharpened, and fastened at the end of sticks. Santerre, and the Marquis of St. Hurage, already distinguished on the 5th and 6th October, marched with drawn swords at their head. Battalions of the National Guard * followed in good order, *that their presence might restrain the tumult;* after them followed women, and then another body of armed men. Flags and streamers exhibited the words

* Here we have another instance of the petty frauds which Pétion and his associates practised to bring about this great iniquity. The proposition of marching battalions of the National Guard on each side of the procession to awe the turbulent and keep the movement within bounds, seems plausible; and the more so because at this period the majority of the National Guard was well affected, though there was a considerable number of an opposite character. But looking more closely at Pétion's proposition, we find that it was *not* that the battalions in military order and under their responsible officers were to be employed, but '*volunteers* from the several battalions;' which volunteers would naturally be, and actually were, as factious and as furious as the worst of the mob. By this trick, a pretended restraint was turned into an additional danger.

THE CONSTITUTION OR DEATH. Old and torn breeches were carried in triumph amidst shouts of *Vivent les Sans-culottes!* and finally, an atrocious signal added ferocity to the absurdity of the exhibition. On the top of a pike was stuck a bullock's heart, inscribed HEART OF AN ARISTOCRAT. At this sight sorrow and indignation burst forth, and the sanguinary emblem was withdrawn, but only to appear again at the gates of the Tuileries. The applause of the galleries—the shouts of the processionists—the civic choruses—the variety of noises—the silent anxiety of the assembly—formed altogether a scene strange to witness, and alarming even to the deputies who acknowledged the mob as their auxiliaries.'

This picture, frightful as it appears, is but another of M. Thiers' efforts to attenuate the atrocities which he cannot venture to conceal. In the first place, in enumerating the parties to the *conciliabules** which produced the insurrection, he omits to mention Danton, Fabre, Laclos, the notorious Orleanists, and, as we have before seen, chooses to introduce Robespierre, whose presence would have been at that period a proof that it was not an Orleanist movement. Then he invents an exhibition of 'emblems of *peace* and *war* offered to the choice of the enemy.' There was not the slightest colour for this fable. No allusion, either by emblem or by cry, was made to any other war or enemy but that which M. Thiers wished to keep out of sight—the *war on the King;* and this he further endeavours to do by omitting from his list of the emblems and inscriptions those that showed the real nature and object of the insurrection. How is it that he, professing to be an historian, gives but *one* only of the numerous inscriptions exhibited on the banners†—the vague and almost innocent one of '*The Constitution or Death*'? why does he conceal the more direct alternative which could be addressed only to the King—'*The Sanction*

* I have not attempted to translate this word, for which we have no English equivalent. The French used it plentifully during the Revolution for a secret council held for a bad purpose. One of the most frequent accusations that the contending parties bandied with each other, was that they held *conciliabules*.

† We are aware that he would answer that he copied the inscriptions from the *Moniteur;* but the *Moniteur* does not affect, as M. Thiers does, to describe the whole procession, and, moreover, the *Moniteur* was always under the direction of the governing faction of the day, and published what it dictated. But even that flimsy excuse fails M. Thiers, for he copies the *Moniteur* in nothing but the suppression of the inscriptions that menaced the lives of the King and Queen. Nay, he suppresses one inscription of that character, '*Down with the* VETO,' which even the *Moniteur* gives. The others mentioned in the text are to be found in the publications of the day; in Dr. Moore's excellent work; and even more recently in M. Lamartine.

or Death'? that is, if the King will not submit, we shall murder him. Why does he omit, '*Tremble, Tyrant, thy last hour is come*'? Or the image that followed, of the *Queen hanging on a gibbet;* or the model of a guillotine with an explanatory legend, '*National justice on Tyrants*—DEATH *to* VETO and his WIFE.' These, the true indications of the spirit of the movement, M. Thiers suppresses, and then winds up this act of the deplorable drama with this hypocritical exclamation—

'Alas! why should it be that in those seasons of civil discord, reason should be unavailing! Why did those *who called in the disciplined barbarians of the North*, force their adversaries to call up those other undisciplined barbarians, who, by turns gay and *ferocious*, swarm in the hearts of great cities, and form a layer of *brutality* under the surface of the most brilliant civilization.'

In uttering these ejaculations, which would be ridiculous for their nonsense if they were not disgusting for their hypocrisy, M. Thiers must have reckoned on his readers being so ignorant as not to know that at this period there was no more real apprehension in Paris of the 'disciplined barbarians of the North,' than of an invasion of Chinese; and that, moreover, it was but two months before this that the dismissed Cabinet had forced the reluctant King—not *to call in*, but—to declare an aggressive * war against the 'disciplined barbarians of the North.' Nor can we omit to notice his total disregard of even his own assertions and arguments, when, after having commenced by asserting that the movement was the spontaneous impulse of the people, he concludes by confessing that it was instigated by the adversaries of the King evoking from the lowest dregs of society a 'brutal and ferocious' mob.

This intrusion on the Assembly was, however, like every other step in the revolution, a mere pretext to introduce and colour the real object, which certainly was, as the banners truly announced, the dethronement at least, more probably the murder,† of the King.

* Dumouriez expressly states that the object of the war was to carry it at once into the Austrian territory, and especially Belgium, which was then in a disaffected state.—*Vie*, ii. 243.

† M. Thiers himself does not venture directly to deny this, but says ambiguously, 'The disorder had been great, but it was exaggerated, and it was said (*on prétendait*) that this project [of murder] had been arrested only by a lucky chance!' and there he leaves it. But what happened two days later must have removed all doubt, had any existed; for, on the 23rd, the Minister of the Interior complained to the Assembly that another petition was pre-

While the procession was thus halted at the doors of the Assembly, awaiting the result of the debate, the crowd grew impatient for the planting the Tree of Liberty—the first ostensible purpose of the movement. The leaders were embarrassed what to do with it; they found unexpectedly the garden of the Tuileries well protected by the National Guard of the neighbourhood, and some troops of the line and companies of Swiss guards; they dared not venture on a hostile irruption; but what, then, was to be done with their principal trophy? By a strange turn of events, this tree of liberty—*la tremble*—the intended emblem of the King's terror—became that of their own fears,* and they were reduced to the expedient of planting their aspen in the court-yard of the Capucine Convent, behind the Assembly, on the opposite side of the Palace, and far out of sight.

Indeed the gates of the garden, and the courts all round the palace, were so solidly closed and so strongly guarded, that neither the disorderly rabble, nor their, at once, ruffian and cowardly leaders, were in a condition to force their way, nor in any disposition to risk themselves in attempting it. Secure of Pétion and his municipal subordinates and the commandants of the two Faubourg battalions, they were surprised and disconcerted by the vigorous opposition of the *Department*, and by the alacrity and numbers with which the great majority of the National Guard had answered their call. No less than twenty-four battalions had arrived at the Tuileries before the procession had reached the Assembly—a force infinitely beyond what even a bolder mob and braver leaders would have ventured to assail, but which, by pusillanimity on one side, and trick and treachery on the other, was baffled and defeated without a blow being struck—or rather, in truth, because it was the King's unfortunate monomania, we may call it, that no blow should ever be struck in his defence.

By a further misfortune the chief command of the National Guards had at this period fallen into accidental, and, it seems,

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pared and placarded through the Faubourg to be presented to them, in these terms:—'*The men of the 14th July* have risen again, and are come to denounce a king no longer worthy of the throne. *We demand that the sword of the law shall strike off his head.* If you refuse our wishes, our hands are armed and ready to *strike down traitors wherever we find them, even amongst yourselves.*'—*Moniteur*, 23rd June.

* See La Regnie's deposition: 'Santerre, *n'ayant point ose forcer* la porte, se relégua dans la cour des Capucins où il fit planter le mai qu'il avait *destiné pour le jardin des Tuileries.*'—*Pièces rel. au 20 Juin*, No. xxxviii.

inadequate hands. After the resignation of Lafayette, jealousy of a single Commandant-general of the National Guard had prevented the appointment of a successor, and the chiefs of the six legions which composed the whole body, were in rotation to act as commanders-in-chief, each for two months. At this time M. de Romainvilliers, chief of the 3rd Legion, was in command. He was a military man; and though his conduct during the day was somewhat ambiguous, and showed little either of zeal or activity, his first disposition of his forces was excellent. As the *programme* of the insurrectionists had announced that the chief scene of their demonstration was to be the Tuileries garden, he placed the greater part of his force on that side, on which also the palace itself was least defensible. Four battalions were placed to cover the approaches from the Place Louis XV. and the Pont Tournant. Two battalions secured the Terrace de l'Eau, which some scattered rioters had early attempted to scale. Ten battalions occupied the whole western terrace of the palace, their right wing commanding the gate opening from the Cour du Manége, and their left, that opening on the quay near the Pont Royal: both these gates were fastened. On the other, or town-side, five battalions were stationed on the Carrousel, in front of the Porte Royale and the courts of the Tuileries. One battalion had special charge of the *guichets*, or arcades of the gallery of the Louvre, to prevent any irruption from the quay to the Carrousel; and finally, one battalion, together with double the ordinary guards, were stationed within the Cour Royale and the anterior posts of the palace. The evident impossibility of forcing this line of defence was, we have seen, the cause of their burying their Tree of Liberty at the Capucins instead of planting it in the Tuileries; as it probably was of leaving on the bar of the Assembly the so-promised petition to the King, which was to have been their passport to the palace. The two principal projects were thus marred; and after they had passed through the Assembly, they found themselves cooped up in the long and narrow *Cour du Manége*, with no exit but to the streets, so that they would have had not even a sight of the scene of their anticipated triumph, for the *Cour du Manége* was separated from the garden by a high wall and solid gates. A considerable portion had passed along through the Petit Carrousel, but with increasing impatience and dissatisfaction, when the affair took another and very unexpected turn. Half a dozen municipal magistrates, the colleagues and creatures of the mayor Pétion,

had joined the mob early in the morning, and had accompanied it throughout the day under pretence of restraining and regulating, but really to protect and encourage it. Pétion himself did not as yet venture to appear in person as Santerre had promised, but *il était là*, in company with these municipals, who, to use a vulgar but very appropriate phrase, contrived to give these formidable battalions the go-by, and, by a bold imposture, to make the unhappy King a party to the assault of his own palace.

The details of this affair are so little known, and yet so characteristic of all the parties, as to deserve a fuller explanation than is to be found in any of the Histories that we know of. It was stated at the time, and M. Thiers has repeated it, with a view to extenuate the invasion of the palace, that there was little or no violence done, and that the King himself had ordered the gates to be opened to the people. This statement having reached a commission of magistrates, appointed a few days after the event to inquire judicially into the circumstances, they desired to have his Majesty's own evidence on the point, which was accordingly officially transmitted to them by the Secretary of State, in these, the King's own, terms:—

'About half-past one in the afternoon of the 20th, three municipal officers, MM. Boucher René, Boucher St. Sauveur, and Mouchet,* came to the King to complain that the gate opening to the Terrace of the Feuillans was closed. M. Mouchet told the King "that the assemblage was legally constituted, and under the protection of the law [a notorious and admitted falsehood]—that it ought to create no apprehension—that it was a meeting of peaceable citizens assembled to present a petition to the National Assembly, and were desirous of celebrating a civic festival in honour of the anniversary of the *Jeu de Paume*—that they were offended at finding the access to the garden closed and the display of force within it, and that it was natural that citizens, peaceable and well intentioned, should be offended at finding themselves objects of suspicion. The King replied, It is your duty to see the law put in force. You should concert measures for that purpose with the commander of the troops. If it be necessary, you may open the gate† to the Terrace of the Feuillans, and the people

* I find this municipal designated in the publications of the day as an *artiste* living in a very remote part of the town. After the 10th of August he was appointed a *Juge de Paix*. The two Bouchers, also colleagues of Pétion in the municipality, were Jacobins, and Boucher St. Sauveur had his reward in being of the deputation of Paris in the massacre-election to the Convention, where he voted for the death of the King, which there is every reason to suspect he would have willingly anticipated on the 20th June.

† It seems very doubtful what gate the King meant to consent to have opened; for, according to all the maps and plans of the time, the people might

may defile *along that terrace*, and must go out by the Cours des Ecuries. Take care, gentlemen, that public tranquillity be not disturbed —that is your duty.'—*Rev.*, No. xviii.

The King, we see, gave no order to open the gates; but, on the responsibility of the magistrates and the commanding officer, he permitted that one gate, as an additional *débouché* for the crowd, should be afforded, and with this important condition—that they were not to quit the *Terrace des Feuillans*, and should go out by the *Cours des Ecuries*. A glance at the plan will show that this expressly forbid what immediately followed—an irruption into the garden itself; nor, if the condition had been observed, would it have involved any direct danger to the palace. But it was like every other stage of the revolution—a weak and timid concession of the King perverted to his ultimate destruction; and if the King and his family had been massacred that day, as they had a narrow escape of being, it might be justly attributed to his own pusillanimity—for such it was, however excusable, or even amiable, the motive may have been—in not having given his own orders to the military commander (who would probably have done his duty) instead of virtually placing him under those of these Jacobin municipals. This incident however, characteristic as it is of all parties, had no other effect on the ulterior transactions than as it encouraged the municipals and their mob to future violence. It appears from the evidence that the detachments of the National Guards, which had headed the procession with their music and cannon, had defiled along the *Cour du Manége*, and through the *Petit* into the Grand *Carrousel*, and were already there before the gate was, by Mouchet's order, opened to the more disorderly portion of the crowd, who, far from keeping to the *Terrace des Feuillans*, spread along the front of the palace, brandishing their miscellaneous weapons and disgusting emblems, and shouting gross insults and bloody menaces against the King and Queen; but the disposition and steady countenance of the troops restrained them from any violence, and they marched in grotesque but harmless disorder across the garden, and made their exit through the iron gate that opens on the Quay; whence their only access to

and would naturally have defiled along the Cour du Manége, and out by the Cours des Ecuries, without coming into the garden at all. The King must have understood that the people were accumulated somewhere whence an opening to the Terrace des Feuillans would facilitate their exit by the Cours des Ecuries.

rejoin the other detachment on the Carrousel was by the *guichets* of the Louvre, where, however, they were stopped by the usual guards of that post, now reinforced by the battalion placed there, as we have said, for that purpose. But here again two municipals (by name Hue and Patrix—some accounts add Mouchet) appeared in the insignia of their magisterial office, and *au nom de la loi—in the name of the law*—ordered away the guard, and marched at the head of the mob to join the first division on the *Grand Carrousel.*

Still, however, the palace seemed in no danger; for though the mob were in great numbers on the Carrousel and the adjacent streets, and had even directed their cannon against the Porte Royale, the four battalions of National Guards outside, and the one—with a considerable force of the line, the gendarmerie, and some guns—within the Cour Royale, rendered any attempt at violence hopeless. But the municipals were again at hand to find an easier way. One set of them *on the garden side* opened a negociation with M. de Romainvilliers (who seems to have lent himself to them with, to say the least of it, great simplicity) for the introduction of a deputation to the King's presence; but while this proposition was occupying M. de Romainvilliers on that side, another set of municipals were more effectually employed on the side of the Carrousel, where one at least of the same Bouchers,* and the same Mouchet,* dressed in their magisterial scarfs, and *au nom de la loi* ordered the guard to retire and the Porte Royale to be thrown open to the people. We are enabled to give, from the report of the Commission of Inquiry, M. de Romainvilliers' own account of this episode:—

'Having obtained from the municipals on the garden-terrace an engagement that only a deputation of twenty persons, the number limited by law, and without arms, should present themselves, the King consented, and I was to conduct them into the Château. I then passed from the garden into the courts, where again I received the same solemn assurance from the municipals at that side. The choice of the persons who were to compose the deputation was going on and almost settled, when suddenly the great gate (Porte Royale) opened, and the people, led by two municipal officers, poured in with the rapidity of a torrent that it was impossible to

* Roederer, with his usual bad faith, affected to discredit the evidence of these circumstances on the score of some alleged confusion of the names of the individual *municipals*; but even M. Thiers gives him up by saying that, however it may be as to individual names, the facts are beyond doubt.

resist. They rushed up the great stairs, broke in all the doors, and overran and ransacked all the apartments. Nothing was left for me but to collect a few grenadiers from the different battalions at hand, whom I led to the apartments of the King and Queen, and placed them near their persons to afford them what protection they could, and they would have died before any insult should be offered to their persons.

'But judge of my surprise when I now heard how the great gate had been opened. It was done I found by orders *in the name of the law*, given by the municipals who were at the head of this armed procession, and now introduced the whole of it. The National Guards, always obedient to the law, and *forewarned* (*prévenue*) of the *obedience due to the Municipality*, could not oppose the entrance of the people; and, however deeply afflicted by circumstances they were forced to witness, could only afford the King by individual devotion that protection which the *law forbade* them to ensure by their arms.' —*Rapport du Commandant-Général, sur le 20 June.*

What *law* it was that forbade M. de Romainvilliers, at the head of ten or twelve thousand men to resist such an attack on his military post and on the royal residence, which he was by a distinct legal authority, as well as by natural right, bound and enjoined to defend, except the law delivered by the mouth of M. Mouchet, we know not; and as little what *law* justified the defence made upstairs of the door of the King's ante-room, that would not have equally justified the defence of the Porte Royale below. The truth is, that the King's own weakness bent under the usurpation of the Assembly, which in turn protected the turbulence and treason of the Commune; and that these three conspiring causes intimidated and paralysed every branch of royal or even constitutional authority. Poor De Romainvilliers was a liberal, and not unwilling to find excuses for non-resistance. And it cannot be pleaded in his behalf, that if he had acted with more decision he was in danger of being chastised by his troops, for though there was certainly some disaffection in the body, and especially in the artillery, who were of a lower class of men, there is no reason to doubt that the great majority were not merely ready but anxious to repress the outrage. We find, in the evidence of M. Leclerc, adjutant-general of the first legion, who happened to be stationed with the battalions on the *Terrace de l'Eau*, that when—at half-past three —they heard the noise and saw the tumult of the mob rushing into the palace, the men loudly complained of having been brought

there to be passive spectators of such an outrage; and, he adds, to their credit, that, angry as they were at such a humiliation, none of them abandoned their post.

But whatever there may be blameable or ambiguous in his conduct on this occasion was to be soon and grievously expiated—he perished miserably two months later in the massacre at the *Abbaye*, probably by the very same, certainly by the same class, of hands and weapons, towards the preliminary triumph of which his weakness had, we hope involuntarily, seconded the profound wickedness of Pétion and his accomplices.

We cannot conclude this portion of our subject without bringing to our readers' attention the following singular and interesting coincidence. Though Romainvilliers was, by rotation, commander-in-chief, three * of his five colleagues were also on the spot—Acloque, as commanding the guard which was about to be relieved; Mandat, commanding the new guard (the old guard being, as we have said, retained on the emergency); and La Chesney, who came on Romainvilliers' invitation. Mandat and La Chesney, like Romainvilliers, were thought to lean to the popular side; Acloque was a decided royalist. The unfortunate Mandat, as we shall see presently, was massacred at the Hôtel de Ville on the morning of the 10th of August; La Chesney was massacred at La Force on the night of the 2nd of September; Acloque—who had distinguished himself by an active and effective devotion to the King's personal safety on the 20th of June—alone survived the revolution; a warning, says Peltier, to the ambition of pleasing the *people*—but rather, we should say, a warning against the demagogic disorganization of society, which, though it begins by attacking its bolder opponents, soon sacrifices the trimmers and time-servers, and finally devours its authors.

Before we come to the personal outrage on the King, we must go back a little to observe one of the sly and stealthy steps, carefully calculated for the impunity of the agitators, by which it was brought about. Santerre had led the procession; he had marched through the hall about half-past 11 o'clock, and his soldiers had defiled through the Petit Carrousel into the Grand; his mob had marched through the garden and round by the Quay to the same

* Of the two others, Billair and Pinon, we find no mention on this occasion; they sank into obscurity.

rendezvous. During this interval we find no trace of the hero of the day; he seems to have lingered in or about the *sanctuary*—the hall of the Assembly—where, whatever might happen, he was not only personally safe but visibly irresponsible. It is obvious that it was rather his duty to have directed and attended the *débouché* of the immense crowd he had brought into this confused and intricate locality; but we, nevertheless, admit that he might plausibly enough allege a desire to see the hall of the Assembly clear of the intruders; but he did more: for when the procession was over, we find him re-appearing at the bar to offer the National Assembly—what? *a flag*, with which this orator of a body of tumultuous and illegal petitioners condescended to reward the National Assembly for its '*amitié*' to the petitioners—that is, setting both *intermediate* municipal and constitutional law at defiance. We nowhere find any attempt to account for or explain this ridiculous offer. What flag was it? when had it been thought of? by whom voted, and *when* made?—for it was but at noon that the Assembly had, after stormy debates, admitted the procession, and the flag was produced about three: and, after all, what was to be inferred from or done with the flag? Of all the proceedings of this mysterious day, this affair of the flag seems to us the most inexplicable, except on the supposition that Santerre, like his accomplice Pétion, was calculating on, and providing for, the consequences of a great crime which was to have been committed in the absence of both—of which, if it succeeded, they would claim the original merit—of which, if it failed, they could repudiate the accidental and unpremeditated guilt.

It is certain that when the two detachments of rioters were assembled on the Grand Carrousel, after their march through the Assembly, they were in a quiescent state; till Santerre, after some hours' eclipse (at least to us), re-appeared, and reproached them for their inactivity. Hours—half-hours—minutes, are of importance in examining such a crowd of events occurring within so short a limit both of time and space, and we have no certain evidence whether Santerre's visit to the Carrousel preceded or followed the presentation of the flag. Rœderer seems to imply that he came on the Carrousel about four o'clock; *after* he had presented the flag; but that does not accord with the other evidence, nor even with his own, all which dates the irruption into the palace at half-past three. The point is of little importance in the

result, nor would it much affect Santerre's character whether he directed the attack and then slunk back to the Assembly, to exhibit before so many witnesses an *alibi* from the actual violence —or whether, though present, he kept in the background, and did not personally join in the outrage he had prepared and directed. However this may have been, we have evidence enough of the ferocity and hypocrisy with which he conducted this portion of the affair. He came, says Rœderer,

'about 4 o'clock, and asked his men, "*Why have you not got into the palace? You must get in—what else have we come for?*" He then orders the gunners of his battalion to come forward, and declares that *if the gate be not opened, he will blow it open with his cannon.*'

This, however, Rœderer thinks was a mere bravado, for

'the two municipals, Boucher and Mouchet, had already promised that they would have the gate opened for him.'

In fact, all the revolutionists were convinced that if a shot had been fired, their defeat and destruction were certain. But still it remains uncertain whether Santerre was really present at the opening of the gates: we, on the whole, think *not*—first, because none of the witnesses who saw the irruption mention him, and they could hardly have overlooked the commander-in-chief of the invading army; secondly, because the first mention we find made of him is after the palace had been nearly two hours in the possession of his mob; and thirdly, because when at last he appeared at the vestibule of the palace itself, forced thither, as he protested, by a mob which hustled him along, he called the bystanders to witness for him that he did 'not voluntarily invade the royal residence.' There seems to have been in this man's character a very remarkable combination of turbulence and cowardice. He did not come so far till he was sure all personal danger was over, and then he thought of protecting himself against legal consequences. He followed, instead of having led, his army into the palace.

M. Rœderer, with an affectation of candour, regrets that not so much as a single sentinel appeared either in the vestibule, or on the stairs, or at the interior doors, to resist the invaders; but this is of a piece with the whole of his conduct at the time and his apology since—an attempt to throw the blame in the wrong place. The resistance to an attack on the palace was prepared and ready at the right place, where alone it could be effective—that is, at

the approaches and entrances, which were guarded, as we have seen, by ten thousand men. Of what value would half-a-dozen interior sentinels have been? and would any one in his senses have advised that after the external barriers and their ten thousand defenders had been *forced*, there should have been a fight in the vestibule or on the stairs between a couple of sentinels and the torrential mob? and could anything have resulted from such insanity but the massacre of every living soul within the palace? No one can doubt that the military force was abundantly sufficient to have prevented the mischief to which it was made a witness and almost a party; but even for them, it may be said, that they could not be prepared to find themselves paralyzed and virtually disarmed *au nom de la loi;* and if, as M. Rœderer suggests, three or four sentinels had made a show of resistance at the vestibule or great stairs, would they not have been equally petrified into inaction by the scarfs * of the municipals and the talismanic formula —*au nom de la loi?*

But again, let us, in justice to surprised and intimidated subordinates, not forget that the king's own weakness in receiving the *Bouchers* and *Mouchets*, in submitting to their insolent dictation, and—worse than all in immediate effects—in transmitting his orders (whatever they were) *through them*, instead of by a minister or the military commanders, destroyed all subordination and confidence, broke up the whole line of defence, and afforded these men not only the opportunity but a kind of encouragement to carry out to its full extent their successful treachery.

It may seem that we dwell too long on such ignoble ruffians and their petty stratagems; but let it be recollected that they were the foundations and the founders of the FRENCH REPUBLIC, and that this day of the 20th of June is no otherwise distinguished from the other *glorious days* which, antecedently and subsequently contributed to the grand catastrophe than that in this case we happen to have a little more insight into the infamy of the process.

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* Paltry as the trick may seem, it is still highly characteristic of the whole proceeding, that these municipals sometimes displayed their scarfs, and sometimes took them off and put them in their pockets, according to the object of the moment. While encouraging and directing the mob, they were mob, like the rest; but when they were to command the troops to open the passages, they became municipal officers, and exhibited their scarfs—au nom de la loi.

The precise object of the insurrection of the 20th of June is still a question. We believe it to have been—as was subsequently that of the 10th of August—twofold. The Jacobins hoped that, in the scuffle, the King might be murdered—the Girondins intended only to intimidate him into the recall of Roland and the Girondin Ministry. The mere Jacobin attempt on the King's life was prevented by a combination of accidents; and the general horror which the brutalities of the mob excited throughout France, and, above all, in the armies, defeated the Girondin object: so that the 20th of June turned out to be no more than a *rehearsal* for the 10th of August,—when we shall see the same actors playing over again the same parts on the same stage, but with, unhappily, a different result.

In this *June* affair the greatest share of blame was imputed to Pétion, the mayor, who, though he eventually suffered death as a Girondin, was at this time so popular with the Jacobins that it seems even to this hour hard to determine whether, on the 20th of June, he acted in concert with the party that intended murder, or the party that meant only intimidation. His conduct, however, was blamed by all honest men. The Council General of the Department of which Rœderer was, by his office, a leading member, suspended Pétion from his functions; and a violent struggle began, in which the whole Jacobin party—Mountain and Gironde—united in defence of Pétion against what called itself the Constitutional party, and Lafayette, the Department. In this contest Rœderer abandoned the Constitutionalists and took the part of Pétion, and, while he admits the atrocity of the insurrection, endeavours to exculpate the mayor from the charge of not having done his duty in suppressing it. Amongst other things, he says,—

'What was the obvious mode of restraining the mob? To guard all the avenues of the palace—to shut the gates of the courts and gardens, and even the doors of the buildings—to place at all the entrances brave men, determined to show a bold front and to support each other—to make a barrier of their bodies—to present an immoveable resistance, and to cover themselves by their bayonets. I once saw at Metz 600 brave men resist for ten hours a mob of 6000, who wanted to destroy a warehouse; and I am convinced that *a firm resistance will always be effective for the preservation of persons and property.* Now, I ask, *whose* duty was it to make these preparations on that 20th of June? The military *commandant-general's*, beyond all doubt. The municipality had nothing to do with it. The mayor

had given a general order to the commandant-general to double the force at the Tuileries, and to take all other measures for ensuring the public tranquillity; and therefore the mayor had done all he could or ought to do.'—pp. 125-7.

We do not quote this as presenting the real state of the case as to Pétion—and to refute it we should need but to quote M. Rœderer's preceding account of the whole of Pétion's conduct;—we shall content ourselves with one out of a hundred passages:—towards the conclusion of the affair, Pétion, says M. Rœderer, harangued the mob and concluded with these words:—

'*The people has done its duty*—yes, *you have acted with the elevation and dignity of freemen*—but you have done enough. Let all now withdraw.'—p. 57.

—It is not therefore as regards Pétion that we have quoted the former passage, but we beg our readers when they shall arrive at the statement of the measures of defence taken on the 10th of August, to bear in mind M. Rœderer's recorded opinions of the mode by which such an assault *could* and *ought* to be resisted.

At this time Rœderer did not anticipate that he should so soon have an opportunity of putting his plan into practice. He wrote to the King on the 7th July,—

'Sire,—The events of the 20th of June will not be repeated—the causes which produced them no longer exist.'—p. 172.

This prophecy appears to us to place M. Rœderer in an awkward dilemma—either he knew nothing of the state of the capital, or he was acting with insincerity and fraud towards the King. Now, unluckily every page of his work shows that he knew perfectly the state of the public mind, and he must have been deaf and blind not to have known it. But another circumstance which occurred about this time throws additional doubts over Rœderer's sincerity in favour of the constitutional monarchy.

His colleagues in the Council-general of the Department—all eminent *constitutionalists*—La Rochefoucault, Talleyrand, &c.—finding that they could not repress the illegal usurpations of Pétion and the Municipality, resigned in the week between the 18th and 23rd July—Rœderer, hitherto their cordial colleague and co-operator, alone kept his place. Without taking upon ourselves to answer the question which he puts—'Was *I* wrong? Were *they* right?'—(p. 276)—we may at least affirm that

Rœderer must be understood to have separated himself, by this act, from the constitutional principles of his former colleagues, and to have adopted those of their Jacobin antagonists.

He tells us that his particular attachment (*liaison particulière*) was to Vergniaud (p. 27), the eloquent leader of the Gironde, and to Guadet and Duclos, two of its most remarkable members. We suspect that there is here some little equivocation. We do not believe that Rœderer had any *liaison particulière* with Vergniaud. Rœderer's representative life ended before that of Vergniaud began. One came from the north-east, the other from the south-west corner of France, nor have we ever found, except in this assertion, any trace of such a *liaison*. It is very remarkable that when, on the morning of the 20th June, Rœderer made, at the bar of the Convention, a very judicious and spirited remonstrance against the assembling armed mobs under the pretence of petitioning, and against the countenance given to such disorders by the Assembly itself, his propositions were opposed *only* by Vergniaud and Guadet. This proves beyond doubt either that there was an infamous *juggle* between them, or—as we confidently believe—that there was, *at this time*, no *liaison particulière* between Rœderer and these two men. We therefore conclude that Rœderer's adhesion to the Girondins must have taken place when he broke with his old *constitutional* friends on the subject of Pétion's suspension.

M. Rœderer—a courtier of the son of *Egalité*—will not *now* be offended at our saying that we have always considered him as of the Orleans party, to which Brissot and others of the Gironde originally belonged, and we suspect that any acquaintance he may have had with Vergniaud arose from this connexion. But Vergniaud, by happening to have become the victim of Robespierre, has become a popular name, and Rœderer is not sorry to ally himself to it, though he cannot show us any one point of his conduct that was influenced by that supposed *liaison*. If the truth were told, we believe it would appear that Rœderer knew a great deal more of *Robespierre* than he did of *Vergniaud*. We, however, so far concur in M. Rœderer's statements as to admit that, on the 10th August, he was acting—probably in concert—certainly in accordance with the Girondins—up to this period only a section of the Jacobins, but who about this time began to place themselves, as they hoped, in a *juste milieu* between the *real* Con-

stitutionalists—the friends of a limited monarchy under Louis XVI. —and the Mountain; and for this purpose condescended to associate themselves to the intriguers who were preparing the *Tenth of August*, in the hope of being able to

'Ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm.'

Indeed Rœderer himself gives this—or rather a still more odious—view of the policy of the Gironde at this period:—

'Things were going faster and farther than the Girondins wished; they were terrified at the rapidity of the popular movement. Their situation was, indeed, become perilous between the Court and M. Lafayette on the one side, and the Jacobins on the other. Their policy now was to temporise—to gain time—to work upon the fears of the Court and on its gratitude, and, by at once protecting and menacing it, to reduce it to the alternative of being crushed by the Jacobins, or of *throwing itself into the hands of the Girondins*. In pursuance of this system a *threatening* address to the King was resolved upon. Its *menacing* and *insulting* language was to be such as should maintain the wavering popularity of the Girondins with the Jacobins, without, however, *delivering them up their prey*. Guadet, the most eloquent of the Gironde party next to, but long behind Vergniaud, drew up and moved the address.'—p. 229.

These are candid and valuable avowals. They tell us nothing indeed that we had not before inferred from the acts and speeches of the Gironde, but it is good to have them thus put beyond all question by the voluntary confession of one of the party. Rœderer adds another trait, which, though but a corollary, deserves separate notice. Guadet's address attributes the existing tumults to the dismissal of the former Girondin ministers, and Rœderer, in approbation of this suggestion, says,—

'This allusion is the mark (*cachet*) of the Deputies of the Gironde —they wished for a Constitution and *a* King—but they wished that the King should be *constitutional*, and that his *ministry* should be such as would be a *guarantee of his intentions*.'—p. 300.

That is, they wished for *Egalité* as King, and themselves as ministers.

With these glimpses of the secret policy of the Gironde, and these indications that Rœderer was anxious to carry it into effect, we now proceed to the account of his own share in the closing scene of these memorable transactions.

'The 9th August, at a quarter past ten at night, the Minister of Justice [De Joly, a constitutional revolutionist] came to the Department [that is the Council, or governing body of the Department of Paris], and told me that the King would send for me if necessary.

'At three-quarters past ten I was summoned to the palace. I arrived at eleven. The drums were beating to arms in all the neighbouring streets—in the royal apartments were several persons, but no crowd. I entered the council-room, or the King's closet—he was there with the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and his ministers—I gave his Majesty the last accounts which had reached me—nothing remarkable had hitherto taken place, but there was a great agitation. I wrote a note to desire the mayor (Pétion) to come to the palace—as I was sealing it he came. He gave the King an account of the state of Paris—he then came to me—*we chatted upon indifferent subjects*, till Mandat, the commandant-general of the National Guard,* and Boubé, the secretary-general of the staff, joined us. Mandat complained to the mayor that the *Administrators of the municipality had refused him powder*—the mayor replied, "*You had not taken the preliminary steps to entitle you to have it;*" a debate arose on this point—the mayor asked Mandat whether he had not some powder remaining from former deliveries—Mandat said that "*None* of his men had more than *nine* cartridges, and *many none at all*, and that they naturally complained of this." This conversation ended here. The mayor then said, "It is dreadfully hot here, I shall go down and take a little fresh air." I, however, expected news from the Department, which had promised to let me hear from them from hour to hour, and I sat down in a corner.'—p. 394.

This looks as if Pétion, having thus by an insidious question ascertained the want of the means of defence, hastened away to apprise his fellow-conspirators.

'About half-past eleven came a letter from the Department—nothing positive known—the hour for ringing the tocsin was not come—I then went down stairs alone *to take the air*, and I went into the court—I was stopped by several national guards—I then turned into the garden—there again I met sentinels—I was walking down the centre alley, when I met a group composed of Pétion, some municipal officers, and members of the Commune, and about fifteen or twenty young national guards, who were singing and dancing about the mayor—they stopped me, and Pétion proposed to me to take *a turn*—"With pleasure!"—we walked to the end of the

* After the resignation of Lafayette the chief command of the National Guards was taken in rotation by the colonels of the six legions which composed the whole body. M. Mandat was colonel of the third legion, and, unhappily for him, in rotation of command in the month of August, 1792.

terrace on the river side, till, hearing the drums beat *to arms* at the palace, we went back.'

Let it be here observed that the two magistrates charged with the defence of the palace reject the application of the military commandant for the ammunition necessary to that defence; and while every quarter of the city confided to their care was in a state of the most alarming excitement, and the drums of the insurrectionists were beating to arms in all the neighbouring streets, they stroll about the garden for a little fresh air.

'During our walk I could not but express to the mayor my grief at the general agitation, and my fears for the consequences. The mayor, however, was more at his ease—"I hope it will end in nothing—commissioners have been sent to the places of meeting—Thomas tells me there will be nothing—Thomas must know." I knew nothing about this Thomas.'—p. 396.

Je ne sais qui est ce Thomas—yet with this reference to a name he never heard before the Procureur Syndic is satisfied. We are much surprised that M. Rœderer should affect to know nothing of '*this Thomas*,' upon whose opinions, it seems, the destinies of the world turned. We will endeavour to help his memory. Was he not a certain *Jean Jacques Thomas*—an active member of the Jacobin Club—assessor to the *Juge de Paris*, and first elector of the section *des Lombards*—residing No. 204, Rue St. Denis—and a notorious agitator in that populous district? Was he not the same *Thomas*, one of that batch of monsters that was elected during and under the terrors of the September massacres as the deputation of Paris? Certain it is that he was the same *Thomas* (as well or better known at that day than Rœderer himself) whom Pétion, in a pamphlet published in the same year, confesses to have been his accomplice in bringing about that insurrection. The following statement, extracted from that very curious and now very rare pamphlet, will exhibibit much of the secret machinery of that insurrection, and such a mixture of fraud, treachery, and cowardice in Pétion, and in his friend and associate Rœderer, as will, we think, explain why the latter was in after life willing to forget all about '*that Thomas*.' When, after the 10th of August, the Girondins and Jacobins began the mortal conflict for each other's heads, and Robespierre reproached Pétion with having been hostile to that glorious movement, Pétion replied in a

long vindication, which our limits oblige us to abridge, though we preserve its meaning.

'I confess,' he says, 'that I endeavoured—and, fortunately, with success—to prevent its breaking out, as was at first intended, on the 26th of July. We were not ready. It had been arranged that the attacking party were to rendezvous at nightfall of the 25th on the Place de la Bastille, and to march thence, in three columns, on the Tuileries, *to seize the king's person and carry him to Vincennes;* but in the course of the evening I received advices that nothing was ready—there was nothing concerted—the attempt must have been a failure, and the misfortune of such a failure I was anxious to prevent; but in a few days the Marsellais arrived; things became more promising; I saw the necessity, and foresaw the success, of the insurrection; and all these circumstances combined to indicate that the *10th August was to be the great day* [*que le grand jour serait le* 10]. The persons that I had sent into the different *sections* [the insurrectionary districts] brought me word of the impatience of the people. My colleague—*citizen Thomas*—whom I had sent into the most violent districts, brought me word that the attack could be no longer deferred. To reconcile my official station as mayor with my fixed resolution to forward the movement, it had been arranged that I should be arrested, so as not to be able to oppose any legal authority against it; but in the hurry and agitation of the moment this was forgotten; and, who do you think, who was it, that was at last obliged to require, to urge, the execution of this precautionary measure?—why, I myself, I; and yet you accuse me of not having favoured the insurrection—I who hailed it, who applauded it, and who contributed as much as anyone else [autant que qui que ce soit] to ensure its success.'—*Observ. de J. Pétion sur la lettre de Robespierre*, pp. 11-15.

This is Pétion's own version, and this is the person on whose sincerity (with that of his colleague Thomas) M. Rœderer now tells us that he relied for believing that all was quiet and safe.

We think this extract will leave no doubt that, though both Pétion and Rœderer were willing to aid the insurrection as a general party measure, their individual conduct was guided by a very nervous anxiety for their own personal safety in the conflict. Rœderer proceeds to tell us—

'After some conversation with some other gentlemen of the group on indifferent subjects [*on indifferent subjects*, though the drums were beating *to arms!*] we reached the palace, and were at the foot of the great stairs when they came to tell Pétion that the Assembly had

sent for him. He went, and I ascended to the royal apartments—I passed through the rooms without stopping, and *went at once to the king's closet; my place could neither be in the first nor second anteroom.* [Equality, with a vengeance!] It was then half an hour past midnight—I had soon after another letter of intelligence from the Department—great agitation in the Faubourg St. Antoine, but as yet no assemblage. I acquainted the ministers with this; and the King, Queen, and Madame Elizabeth successively read my letter.

'Soon after the King received a verbal report, agreeing with my letter—I know not from whom, for whenever any news arrived, or the King made a movement, twenty people pressed around him, while I remained where I was.

'At three-quarters past twelve the *tocsin* was heard on all sides—the windows were open—every one went to them to listen, and some would affect to recognise the bell of this church or of that. Another letter from the Department announces that the Faubourg St. Antoine is in motion—that there are, however, not above fifteen hundred or two thousand men assembled—but that the gunners are all ready with their cannon, and that the citizens are all standing at their own doors, armed, and ready to join the march. I read this to the ministers, and, I think, to the King and Queen. One of the ministers, I do not remember which, now asked me "if there was not *now* a case to proclaim *martial law?*" I replied, "that since the law of the 3rd August, 1791, martial law could only be proclaimed *when the public tranquillity should be habitually disturbed;* but here," said I, "is a very different state of things from a simple disturbance of the public tranquillity—this is a revolt, which is stronger than martial law, or than the power which should proclaim it. It is quite idle to think of such a thing for our present circumstances—moreover, it belongs not to the Department to proclaim martial law even if it were proper, but to the municipality." The minister replies, "We think the Department has the right." I insisted on the negative; and, after consulting the text of the law, continued of the same opinion.'

Here M. Rœderer thinks it necessary to add a note, which, in his general abstinence from revealing anything like the real motive of his words or actions, becomes an important explanation of the foregoing passage: —

'If even I had had the legal right to direct the municipality to proclaim martial law, if I had a force stronger than the revolt, and if the National Guard were unanimous—could I have reasonably hoped that the municipality would have obeyed—they who had the day before formally petitioned the Assembly for the *déchéance* of the king? It would have been foolish to expect that they would have

displayed the red flag against any one but the king and his party. This brings us back to the undoubted fact that the Procureur-General Syndic had no force to oppose to the Parisian insurrection.' —p. 397.

This seems to us a clear confession that Rœderer was afraid to do his duty; and he justifies that fear by the insufficiency of his force; but we must observe in reply that this alleged insufficiency is grounded on the supposition that the troops, the Swiss, and even the National Guard, would not have done their duty—a supposition notoriously false as to the Swiss and even the troops, and very doubtful as to the National Guards. We believe that all under a leader of common sense and courage would have done their duty; and M. Rœderer's shuffling excuses—first as to the *law*, and then as to his *means*—only satisfy us that his mission at the palace was to prevent their doing it. He proceeds—

'I went and sat down on a stool near the door of the bedchamber —for *etiquette was banished*;'—

so it seems—by *him* at least, who, by his magisterial functions, was bound to have given a good example, even if others had forgotten themselves.

'A moment after, the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and one or two *other women*—one tall and thin—came and sat on the other stools (*tabourets*) in the same line. I *then* rose—the Queen asked me *when the Marseillais intended to go home?* I answered, that that very morning the mayor had proposed to the Department to authorise the advance of 20,000 livres to enable them to return, and that the Department had approved the proposition; but that it was not reduced to writing, because we did not like to give as a reason our desire to hasten their departure. The mayor (who was accompanied by M. Osselin) said the Marseillais were impatient to be gone—that they were even dissatisfied with the Parisians, and that they only asked the 20,000 livres as a loan.'

The very name of Pétion's coadjutor on this occasion is a test of Pétion's real designs. This Osselin was a furious demagogue, and one of the leaders of this very insurrection—in reward for which he became—with *that Thomas* whom M. Rœderer forgets that he had ever heard of—one of the *Septembriseur*-representatives of Paris. He voted for the death of the King, but was himself sent to the scaffold by Robespierre. He was guillotined on the 26th June, 1794, already half dead from an incomplete attempt at

suicide by a rusty nail extracted from his prison wall, and which remained sticking in his side. This wretched man's case was remarkable in another way—*arte periit suâ*—he suffered under a law which he himself had proposed against harbouring emigrants. It was found that he had a mistress—a Madame de Charry—a *divorceé*, who, truly or falsely, was accused of having been an emigrant, and Osselin was condemned under his own law for harbouring her. The poor woman, who had been already convicted, was respited on account of pregnancy, but she was executed on the birth of her child. We return to Rœderer.

'About half-past two in the morning I received accounts *rather tranquillizing*. They told me that the assemblages were forming very slowly—that the artisans of the fauxbourgs were getting tired, and that probably they would not move forward. A tall man in a grey coat made a similar verbal report to the King, and the bystanders repeated one expression of his which seemed to give satisfaction, "*Le tocsin ne rend pas.*"—(The tocsin does not bring them out.) The Department in their letter asked me for a reinforcement to protect it. I went down to the commandant-general, who gave orders accordingly.'—p. 358.

It is remarkable that the intelligence which *rather tranquillized* Rœderer should have had no such effect on his colleagues, the Department; and it seems hardly reconcilable with common sense and good faith that M. Rœderer should detach *from* the palace—which is the avowed object of the intended attack—part of his force—already too weak—to defend the Hôtel de Ville, which he well knew could be in no kind of danger.

'Soon after this accounts were brought that M. Manuel, the procureur of the *Commune*, had given orders for the removal of the cannon which had been placed on the Pont Neuf, by order of the commandant-general, for the special purpose of preventing the junction of the two fauxbourgs St. Antoine and St. Marcel:—"but, on the contrary," said M. Manuel, "these two fauxbourgs have to-day to do *a great piece of business in hand which requires their union.*" The ministers discussed the propriety of ordering the cannon to be replaced, in spite of the orders of M. Manuel.

'We were told at the same time that a deputation of the Commune had just informed the Convention that the mayor was detained in the palace as a prisoner, and to demand that he be restored to the Commune—that the mayor, however, who had remained at the garden-gate of the Assembly, had denied that any violence had been employed to detain him in the palace, but that he would go to the

Commune—which he did on foot; and about four o'clock in the morning; his carriage, which had been standing in the great court of the Tuileries, went home empty.'—p. 359.

We have seen Pétion's own account of this cowardly device; yet this LIE about the arrest of the mayor was not only propagated all that night and the next day, but an inscription was painted, and remained *for months*, on the front of the palace, to commemorate 'the virtuous Pétion's escape from the violence of the Court.'

'In these circumstances I wrote to invite the Council of the Department to join me at the palace, stating that the mayor had gone to the *Commune*; that we were deliberating whether to annul the orders of the Procureur de la Commune (Manuel); that we did not know whether he had issued these orders of his own head or in concert with the Municipality or the Department; that to take measures against the Municipality or Department was not a question of mere police, and that I could not take on myself to decide alone the course to be followed on this emergency. The Department, instead of joining me in a body, sent a deputation of two members, MM. Leveillard and De Faucompret. They, I, and the six ministers then retired to a small room looking towards the garden and next the King's bedchamber.

'I do not recollect what passed at this consultation; MM. Leveillard and De Faucompret perhaps may supply the deficiency: I only remember that I persisted in desiring that the whole Department should come to the palace; and that, when it was observed that it could not change its official station without an order from the King, I went to request the King to give the order: the King said, "My minister is not here; when he comes I will give the order." It was not yet day.

'It was about this time that the mayor's carriage drove away. Some one opened a shutter of the King's closet to see what the noise of the carriage was. Day was beginning to dawn. Madame Elizabeth went to the window—she looked at the sky, which was very red, and called to the Queen, who was sitting at the back of the room, "*Come, sister, and see the rising of the dawn.*" The Queen went; —*that day she saw the sun for the last time!*

'The King, who had retired into his bedchamber, now returned to the closet—he probably had lain down on the bed, for the powder and curls had been shaken out on one side of his head, which made a strange contrast with the other side, which was full powdered and curled. Just then, too, the blinds were opened all through the apartments. M. Mandat came to tell me that the Commune had

summoned him a second time to attend them. HE *thought he ought* NOT *to go.* M. de Joly (the minister of the interior) thought his presence at the palace indispensable. I thought that the commandant-general was essentially at the orders of the mayor—that it was possible that the mayor might have resolved to proceed to meet [or prevent—*aller au devant*—the expression seems studiously ambiguous] the assemblages of the people, and might need for that purpose the presence of the commandant of the public force. *On* MY *advice Mandat went—though with great reluctance.* I grounded my opinion, also, on the necessity of clearing up the pretended counter-order given by Manuel about the Commune on the Pont Neuf, and of his (Mandat's) stating to the Commune his views of what was necessary to insure the public tranquillity. *Mandat had rendered himself odious to a great proportion of the* [*National*] *Guard by his fanatic devotion to the court.* He was always ready "to pledge his life for the good intention of the King." He was always "sure that the court had no ill design." I was ignorant of this prejudice against him;—he ought to have taken precautions when going to the Commune—it seems he took none;—I was sorry to hear (*j'eus le chagrin d'apprendre*) that he had been killed by the way (*tué en chemin*).'—p. 361.

This is a most important point of the case, and one on which, we regret to say, M. Rœderer's own account excites a much stronger suspicion against him than we had before entertained. We are far from accusing him of a participation in the *murder* of Mandat; but we now see that it was HE who over-persuaded the *reluctant* victim to leave the post he had been ordered to defend, and the troops who *under him* would have defended it, to attend for no intelligible object at the Hôtel de Ville, where he was seized and murdered, and the *mayor's order for defending the palace* taken out of his pocket; and the inconsistency and the utter futility of the discordant reasons which Rœderer has just assigned for his conduct do look—it must be admitted—exceedingly suspicious. But, after all, we abide by our original opinion, that he was not privy to the intended *murder*, but only wished to have Mandat *kept out of the way* in order to insure non-resistance, and to get possession of the *order*, so important to his friend Pétion's personal safety. Mandat had been an officer in the regular army—he possessed courage and ability, and was devoted to the constitutional monarchy.

'About four o'clock I was called—I no longer remember by whom or how—into a room which was, I believe, that of Thierry, the King's valet-de-chambre, where I found the Queen sitting near the

chimney, with her back to the window. The King was not present. I think I recollect to have entered that room by the door of the small apartment in which we had held our conference, and I suppose it was when the Queen had been informed, by one of the ministers, of the results of that conference, that she sent for me. The precise moment, and some details of the localities, may escape me, but the substance of my statements is exact. The Queen asked me what was to be done in these circumstances? I answered that it seemed to me necessary that the King and the royal family should proceed to the National Assembly. M. Dubouchage said, "Why, you propose to deliver the King to his avowed enemies!" "Not so much his enemies as you think," replied I; "for recollect they voted four hundred to two hundred in favour of M. Lafayette. Moreover, I only propose it as the less danger of the two." The Queen then said to me, in a very firm tone, "Sir, we have a force here; it is time to know, at length, who is to be master—the King and Constitution, or a faction." "Madame," I answered, "in that case let us see what dispositions have been made for resistance:" and I proposed to call in the officer who commanded in the absence of Mandat, M. de la Chesnay.' *

This really is too impudent: M. Rœderer has been many hours in the palace—he has concurred in the refusal of ammunition to its defenders—he has taken no step whatsoever to impede the assailants—he has detached some of the force which he says was already too small—he has just sent away the unfortunate commander-in-chief—and then, at four in the morning, he says to the Queen, '*Let us see what dispositions have been made for resistance!*'

'I asked M. de la Chesney some questions on the detail of his arrangements, and whether he had taken measures to prevent the unopposed march of the assemblages of the people to the palace. He said, "Yes; that the Carrousel was guarded"—*et cetera*—[in so critical a place this *et cetera* is very suspicious]—but then, addressing the Queen with a good deal of ill-humour, he said, "Madame, I ought not to conceal from you that the apartments are full of all kinds of people who very much *impede our duty (gênent le service) and prevent free access to the King*, which very much disgusts the National Guards." "They have no cause to be disgusted," said the Queen, "on this account. I will be answerable for the conduct of every one that is here—they will march in the front—in the

* M. de la Chenaye (Rœderer misspells his name) was Colonel of the 6th legion, and next in rotation to Mandat, but he seems to have been, unfortunately, a man of very different principles and character.

rear — amongst you — how you will; they will obey all orders, and do whatever may be thought necessary; they are men to be depended on."'

This ill-timed, impudent, and absurd complaint of La Chenaye, whose business was to defend the *approaches* of the palace, and not to regulate the King's household, was probably another attempt to insure *non-resistance*. The King's private friends and servants were to be separated from him, in order that he might not be assisted by their counsels or their courage, and, when the Queen rejected this monstrous proposition, mark how Rœderer attempts to misrepresent and envenom so natural a decision:—

'These expressions of the Queen made me believe that a strong resolution had been taken to resist, and that there were some who flattered the Queen with the hope of a victory.'

And why not *resist?* What could be more natural, more legal, on the general principle of self-defence? but in the special case had not even the revolutionary authorities sanctioned, had not Pétion given a written order to resist? did not Rœderer himself affect to encourage the National Guard to resistance? Why, then, this kind of reproach against *the Queen* for adopting an idea which was equally that of Rœderer and Pétion? This is worth notice, as a specimen of the rancour of the revolutionists in blaming the poor Queen for everything she said or did, however innocent or laudable, nay, even when she only adopted their own suggestions. This is the strain and spirit of all the revolutionary writers, from Marat and Hébert down to Rœderer and Thiers.

One would have thought that the motive for resistance was on this occasion sufficiently obvious; and, indeed, Rœderer's whole conduct and narrative prove that the saving the inmates of the palace from massacre was all that any one thought of; but after the conflict the conquerors thought it politic (with a view to their still more bloody designs against the King and Queen) to represent *them* as the aggressors; and accordingly M. Rœderer here takes an opportunity of chiming in with this most absurd calumny, though it is contradicted by every fact that he states, and every second word that he writes.

'I half saw (*entrevis*) that this victory was desirable, at least for the purpose of awing (*imposer*) the National Assembly. These circumstances created in me a confused apprehension of a resistance at once useless and bloody, and of an attack on the National Assembly

after the retreat or defeat of the mob; and these apprehensions added an insupportable weight to my responsibility.'—p. 362.

We can only say, that if, in all this scene of humiliation, danger, and despondence of the royal family, M. Rœderer could fancy that he saw any symptoms of so vigorous, so audacious a resolution as that of *attacking* the National Assembly—fear must have already made him mad; but that, at the end of forty years, he should repeat such stuff, shows that he was not mad; and he must feel that his conduct was strangely inexcusable when he has recourse to such miserable and flagrant falsehoods.

'I insisted that at least the King should write to the National Assembly for assistance. M. Dubouchage offered some objection. "If that should be inadvisable, at least let two of the ministers proceed to the Assembly to represent the state of affairs, and request them to send a deputation of their members." This was adopted, and MM. de Joly and Campion departed to go to the Assembly.

'We were still discussing the state of affairs in the Queen's presence, when we heard shouts, groans, and hootings in the garden. The ministers looked out of the window. M. Dubouchage, much affected, exclaimed, "Good God! 'tis the King they are hooting! What the devil was he doing down there?—let us fly to rescue him!" He and M. de Sainte Croix hastened down to the garden. The Queen then burst into tears without speaking a word, and frequently wiped her eyes.'—p. 362.

Here M. Rœderer interrupts his narrative to make some observations on the personal conduct of the Queen, which we think should not be omitted.

'I know not on what authority almost all historians have attributed to the Queen, on the night preceding the 10th of August, expressions and designs of supernatural heroism—such as saying that she would be nailed to the walls of the palace rather than leave it; and having given the King pistols with an exhortation to employ them against his own existence. I know not when or to whom she could have said or done such things.'—*Ib.*

On this passage we must observe that it seems to authorize some doubts of M. Rœderer's strict veracity. It suits his case to endeavour to show that there was no reluctance on the part of the Royal Family to adopt his advice of abandoning the Tuileries, and his evidence should, therefore, at best, be received with some allowance; but we think we can show, *aliundè*, that the foregoing statement is a *prepense* misrepresentation. We never heard or

read that the Queen had presented a pistol to the King, 'to be employed against his own existence.' On the contrary, every historian that we happen to have at hand, who mentions the incident of the *pistols* at all—Mignet—Papon—Alison, &c.—state distinctly—that the Queen armed her husband, with an exhortation, *not* to attempt his own life, but—to put himself at the head of his guards, and resist the attack. '*Come, Sir*,' she is stated to have said, '*this is the moment to show yourself.*' M. Rœderer does not, he tells us, know on what authority the assertions relating to the Queen's spirited conduct can have been made. We can tell him: the anecdote of the pistols was, we believe, first given in the '*Recueil des Pièces trouvées aux Tuileries*,' which was published by 'the virtuous Roland.' The paper in which it is told is evidently an imposition; and we may doubt the fact itself; but whether the fact be true or false, the *motive* that Rœderer, for his own miserable object, assigns to it—namely, that it was a suggestion, on the part of the Queen, that her husband should *commit suicide*—is a calumny equally malignant and absurd. As to the phrase expressive of her great reluctance to quit the palace, which M. Rœderer particularly quotes, that '*she would rather be nailed to its walls*,' and of which also he says that he knows not to whom it could have been spoken—we again can inform him that it never was pretended that it was said to him, nor even in his presence. M. Peltier (the first, the best informed, and the most accurate of all the historians of the 10th of August) is the first who could mention it, and he expressly states that the Queen used the expression *in private—in confidence*—to two attendant friends, as soon as she heard that a proposition for quitting the palace was likely to be made (*Peltier*, vol. i. p. 129). So that M. Rœderer's not having heard it is no proof that it was not said. Nor does M. Rœderer attempt to deny the unanimous assertion of all the writers on the subject, that she showed the greatest reluctance to adopt his advice. Our author then proceeds:—

'For my part I saw nothing of the kind; and what I did see and hear is irreconcilable with these strange stories. The Queen, during this fatal night, exhibited nothing *masculine*—nothing *heroic*—nothing affected or romantic. I saw neither fury, nor despair, nor revenge; she was a woman, a mother, a wife, in a situation of imminent peril: she feared—she hoped—she desponded, and revived; but she was also a queen, and the daughter of Maria Theresa. When tears escaped her, it was without a moan, or a sigh, or even a word

of complaint. Her anxiety and her grief were compressed or concealed by her sense of her station—her dignity—her name. When, after having burst into tears in Thierry's room, she re-appeared in the audience-room, the traces of the tears had already vanished from her eyes and cheeks: her air was grave, yet calm, and even at ease. The courtiers whispered each other—"What serenity! what courage!" and, in truth, her calmness evinced great fortitude; but there was no affectation of bravery, as has been said, nor even of exaltation, nor anger, nor despair!'

All this we believe to be substantially true—but our readers will observe that, after endeavouring to depreciate her Majesty's conduct, and denying it to have been *heroic*, he is at last forced to describe it as a '*dignified calmness*,' a '*serene* and *unaffected* fortitude.' If this was not *heroic*, what can deserve that epithet? It is a remarkable peculiarity which seems to have escaped Rœderer, that the tears which have occasioned this digression—

'——— the last—the first—
The only tears that ever burst
From "that indignant" soul,'—

were shed on witnessing an *insult* to the sacred person of her *husband*, and heroically concealed, lest her sensibility should seem to aggravate the insult. We must now pursue the sad and busy story.

'The Queen now went into the King's bedchamber to await his return. I followed her; her eyes and cheeks were still red with weeping. Soon after this the two ministers brought back the King, who returned very hot and out of breath from the exertion he had made. He appeared but little disturbed at what had passed.'

Here we must observe that the King, like the Queen, exerted —though with certainly less tact and grace—a similar kind of royal restraint on his feelings; for, although he appeared to M. Rœderer to be on this occason 'little disturbed,' it is well known that even much slighter marks of disapprobation from his people (from whom he justly thought he deserved other treatment) gave him the liveliest affliction.

'The ministers and I now returned into the same little room in which we had held our former conference. The council of the Department had at last come, to the number, as I recollect, of nine; they confirmed the accounts of the municipality having given five thousand ball-cartridges to the Marseillais.'

It cannot be too often observed, that Pétion, the head of this municipality (the Procureur-Syndic not objecting), had in the

course of the night refused to supply the legal commandant of the legal force with the necessary ammunition for the *defence* of the palace, upon some formal quibble; but to the illegal insurrectionary force which was to head the *attack*, five thousand ball-cartridges were at once issued.

'It was now about six o'clock, when a citizen, I believe a justice of the peace, with two municipal officers, MM. Borie and Leroux, came into the room where the ministers and we of the Department were assembled, to tell us that the Commune had been disorganized, and that the sections had elected new representatives to the Commune—that the mayor was watched in his own house—that Mandat was arrested or killed—that all Paris was up in arms—that the fauxbourgs were assembled and ready to march—that the Marseillais and the battalion of the Cordeliers were certainly already on the march. I again pressed the ministers to conduct the King and his family to the National Assembly. M. Dubouchage, deeply affected by the danger to which he believed that the King had been lately exposed in the garden, said to me, "No; he must not go to the Assembly; he cannot do it in safety: he must stay here." *

* * * * * *

'In these circumstances, and seeing that it was determined to abide in the palace the approaching events, I proposed to the Department that *we* should go to the Assembly to report the last accounts we had received, and to refer to its prudence for the measures to be adopted. They agreed with me, and we set out on our way to the Assembly.'—p. 364.

This is almost an admission that the resolution to defend the palace was a virtual termination of Rœderer's mission, and that, so far from having come to assist in the defence, he felt that as soon as defence was determined on it was high time for him to go away. We shall see how his retreat was cut off, and how he then took still more effectual measures to force the King to the Assembly.

'When we had reached the coffee-house on the terrace of the Tuileries we met the two ministers who had been before sent to the Assembly returning. They asked us *Whither we were going!* "*To the Assembly.*" "*What for?*" "*To ask it either to send a deputation to assist us at the palace, or to call the King and his family within its own purlieus.*" "*'Tis quite useless—we have been just making the same request in vain—the Assembly would hardly grant us a hearing—indeed, there are not members enough to make a house for business, being not more than*

* This blank is in the original. Rœderer does not think it right to repeat the whole of what M. Dubouchage said.

sixty or eighty." These observations suspended our progress. We saw, too, several armed men running along the terrace of the castle to meet us at the entrance of the Assembly, and some of our members feared that our return might be cut off. We, in consequence, turned about and proceeded back to the palace. The ministers went upstairs into the royal apartments. My colleagues and I were stopped at the door by some gunners, who were posted with their guns at the garden entrance. One of the gunners asked me, with a sorrowful air, "*Gentlemen, shall we be obliged to fire on our brethren?*" I answered, "*You are placed here to keep this gate—to hinder the crowd from entering. You are not to fire unless you are fired upon—if they fire upon you, they are not your brethren.*" This satisfied the man. Then my colleagues observed to me that I ought to proceed into the court-yard to give the same explanation to the National Guard, who were at that side, and who were very uneasy at the idea that they might be ordered to *attack*. As I also was very uneasy at this idea, I willingly acceded to their suggestion.'—p. 365.

This idea, on which M. Rœderer lays such stress for his own justification—this idea of the intention of the *Court* to *attack* the people, is a mere vision, and one which we regret to say he cannot be sincere in thus bringing forward so very prominently. How could the Court, shut up as it and its defenders were within the precincts of the palace, attack the people, unless the people had come to attack them? Even *if* it could be established that the defenders of the palace had struck the first blow—and no such fact can, we boldly assert, be established—still those who, it is admitted by all, had broken in the gates of the courts and even of the palace, and were forcing their way up-stairs into the apartments—and who put to death the Swiss sentinels who endeavoured to maintain their posts,—those, we say, were, in every sense of the word, the aggressors. The obstinacy with which M. Rœderer insists upon this idle suspicion (which, in the end, however, he is *obliged by the force of facts to abandon*) gives us a worse impression as to his real motives than any other portion of his narrative, except his fatal advice to the unfortunate Mandat.

'We crossed the vestibule for this purpose, and entered the front court. On this, as on the garden side, there were four or five pieces of cannon. On the right, from the palace to the wall which separated the court-yard from the Carrousel, was drawn up a battalion of National Guards—grenadiers, I believe. On the left, drawn up in the same manner, was a battalion of Swiss Guards, at an equal distance; and in the interval between the two lines, the palace and the Carrousel, four or five pieces of cannon pointed towards the

Carrousel. The gate between the court and the Carrousel—called La Porte Royale—was shut. We, that is the members of the Department and I, went to the battalion of National Guards. I addressed them in the words which I afterwards stated to the Assembly, and which are repeated with tolerable accuracy in the "Journal des Débats" of the 10th August. As the line was long, and as I had addressed them about one-third of the way down, I was requested to repeat what I said at the other end of the line, which I did. I then went to the gunners in the centre of the court and addressed to them the same things in nearly the same words—"*No attack, but a bold face, and a stout defence.*" One gunner, of a fine countenance and a lofty stature, said, "*But if they fire upon us, will you be here?*" "*Yes,*" I replied; "*and not behind your guns, but before them—to die one of the first, if there is to be any death to-day.*" "*We shall all be here,*" exclaimed my colleagues. At these words the gunner, without making any reply, unloaded the gun, threw the charge on the ground, and with his foot extinguished the lighted match. I had observed that as I had approached the guns the greater number of the men had gone away to avoid hearing me, so that there remained only about half a dozen.'—p. 366.

The reader will not have failed to observe the sudden turn taken by the cannoniers, under the influence of M. Rœderer's eloquence, which, professing to encourage them, seems to have had the very contrary effect. Now it is distinctly stated in several publications—one of which, printed *in the time of Buonaparte, when Rœderer was a Councillor of State*, is now before us—that Rœderer himself had suggested this act of disaffection and mutiny to the cannoniers. These statements have been between thirty and forty years before the public *uncontradicted*. Shall we be thought unreasonable if we say that the kind of defence made in the foregoing passage is imperfect in its evidence, as well as tardy in its appearance?

'*At this moment* the Marsellais and the battalion of the Cordeliers appeared on the *Place du Carrousel*—a deputy* was addressing the guards on the behalf of the people, to persuade them, as I was told, not to fire on the patriots. The municipal officers, who were standing near the Swiss, must have heard what this deputy said. I saw one of them, M. Borie, who had two papers in his hands—he gave one to the Swiss and another to the gunners; he told me since that they were his *requisitions* to the military force to act if necessary.

'The mob now began to knock at the *Porte Royale*—I and my colleagues and the two municipal officers went thither. Then a

* It does not appear whether this means a member of the Assembly or a deputy from the insurgents. We suspect he was both.

citizen, in a grey coat, with a gun, said, "*But, gentlemen, we cannot fire on our brethren.*" "*Nor do we ask you,*" said I, "*to attack them; we only desire that they should not attack you.*" "*You should go and say so to them on the other side.*" "*So I will,*" was my answer, and my intention; but when I got to the gate I found they had let in a pale thin young man, an officer of the artillery of the National Guard—he said the crowd intended to go to the National Assembly, and not to retire till it should have voted the forfeiture (*déchéance*) of the King: he added that they had twelve pieces of cannon on the Carrousel. M. Borie, the municipal officer, summoned him in the name of the law to retire, and to persuade his followers to do the same. I observed to him that the way to the Assembly was not through the palace; and that, moreover, it was illegal to approach the Assembly in an armed body. "*We have no intention,*" replied the young man, "*of doing it any harm—we only come to protect the Assembly.*" "*But that is to invade its freedom.*" "*That is not our intention: we wish it to be free, and delivered from the intimidation of the Court.*" "*But,*" I rejoined, "*we are magistrates, who can only act according to the law—the law forbids armed assemblages. If you will send a deputation of twenty persons into the palace, we shall admit them—we can do no more.*" He replied to me with feeling, "*Assuredly we mean no harm to you—we are all fellow-citizens—and you, M. Rœderer, we know you are a good citizen.*" "*Well, then, in the name of God, be prudent and orderly, and retire.*" *He seemed to acquiesce, and I urged him to influence his companions to retreat.* "*I cannot* decide alone," said he; "come and speak with those without."'—p. 367.

Is it possible that M. Rœderer does not see that this ridiculous colloquy with his pale thin unknown was a mere farce, and that this great, this enormous movement, which had been, as he himself proves, nearly two months in preparation, and which had been gradually, and by an extensive conspiracy, carried to the height at which it then stood ready to precipitate itself on the monarchy, was not to be diverted, much less repelled, by such *pourparlers* as these? M. Rœderer may possibly have thought that he had not sufficient means of resistance, but at least he need not insult the understanding of his readers by representing his desultory promenades about the garden and courts, and his petty speeches and conversations, as the kind of measures which a magistrate, charged with the defence of the palace, and with it of the Monarch and the Monarchy, should have taken. Every word he writes adds to our conviction, that, from the first moment to the last, the main object of M. Rœderer was to force the King into the Assembly, that is, into the hands of the Girondins—at this moment the majority and influencing power of the Assembly.

'While all this was going on they continued to knock with re-

doubled violence at the *Porte Royale;* and it became clear that if we had gone out we could not have got back again. M. Borie then addressed the young man. "*Well then, if you alone cannot decide, go and bring back some of your colleagues with you.*" "*I will bring you my leaders—there are six of them—you will then settle the matter between you.*" He went out; but immediately the gate is violently shaken by redoubled blows—twenty people were sitting astride on the wall, and were conveying, from within to without, conversations and communications which appeared to be very cordial and confidential; and they seemed well inclined to open the gates, which were guarded by only three or four sentinels.'—p. 368.

Why was this communication over the wall allowed if M. Rœderer was in earnest? He had at least force enough to have prevented *that* intercourse, which, as he is forced to admit, exhibited the boldness of the assailants, and the weakness or treachery of those within, in a way that was decisive of the whole affair.

'"There is no longer room for hesitation," said I to my colleagues; "while you remain here to receive the negotiators—if indeed you mean to send us away—I will, if you agree, go up to the apartments and show him the absolute necessity of taking refuge with his family in the National Assembly." They replied, "We will go all together." I hastened to the palace—they followed me; we ascend the great stairs, and traverse the apartments, which seem fuller than they had been in the night. When I reached the room where the King was, I cried very loud, "Gentlemen, room for the Department, which has business with the King!" The crowd opens; I enter with my colleagues. The King was seated near a table close to the entrance to his closet; his hands were resting on his knees; the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and the ministers were standing between the King and the window—probably Madame de Lamballe and Madame Tourzelle were also there, as they afterwards accompanied us to the Assembly. "Sire," said I, "the Department wishes to speak to your Majesty with no other witnesses than your family." The King made them a sign to withdraw, which they did. M. de Joly said, "The ministers must remain with the King." "If the King desires it, I have no objection.—Sire," I continued in an urgent manner, "you have not five minutes to spare; there is no safety for you but in the National Assembly. The opinion of the Department is that you should proceed thither without delay. You have not a number of men sufficient for the defence of the palace: and the disposition of those you have is not good. The gunners, on the mere suggestion of a defensive resistance, drew the charges of their guns." "But," said the King, "I do not see any great crowd in the Carrousel." "Sire, there are twelve pieces of cannon, and prodigious crowds are pouring down from the fauxbourgs."

'M. Gerdret, administrator of the Department, a *zealous patriot*, who was anxious for the King's safety (he was laceman to the Queen), *interposed* to support what I said. "*Hold your tongue, M. Gerdret*," said the Queen; "*it does not become you to raise your voice here; allow the Procureur-Syndic to speak.*"—p. 369.

This little impatience of the Queen at hearing her *laceman*—a person for whose political experience and statesmanlike judgment she could have no great respect—venturing to interfere in so grave a discussion, is very characteristic.

'"But, Sir," the Queen continued, turning to me, "*we have a considerable force.*" "Madam, all Paris is against you;"—and then, returning warmly to what I was saying to the King, "Sire, time presses: it is no longer a request we make—no longer advice that we take the liberty of offering—we have no option left—we must drag you—you must allow us to *drag you*" (*vous entraîner*). The King lifted his head—looked steadily at me for a few seconds—then, turning to the Queen, said, "*Let us go;*" and rose up. Madame Elizabeth passed behind him, and raising her head over the *console* addressed me, "*Will you answer, M. Rœderer, for the King's life?*"—"*Yes, Madam, with my own.*" The King gave me a look of confidence. "Sire, I request your Majesty not to permit any of your court to accompany you—to have no other suite than the members of the Department, who will surround the royal family, and two lines of National Guards, between which you will proceed to the National Assembly." "*Very well*," said the King, "*give orders accordingly.*" M. de Joly exclaimed, "*M. Rœderer, the ministers will follow.*" "*Yes, Sir, they have their proper seats in the Assembly.*" The Queen—"*And Madame de Tourzelle, my son's governess?*" "*Yes, Madam.*"

'I then went out of the King's room, and, opening the door quite wide, I cried with a very loud voice to the persons that pressed round, "*The King and his family are about to proceed to the National Assembly, without any other suite than the Department, the ministers, and a guard—be so good as to clear the way.*" I then asked, "*Is the officer who commands the guard here?*" An officer comes up—"You will order two ranks of National Guards to march at each side of the King—his Majesty so orders." The officer replied, "*It shall be done!*" The King and his family, and the Department, then came into his outer room, where he had to wait a few minutes for the guard. He moved round the circle formed by about forty or fifty of the court. I did not observe that he spoke to any one in particular—I only heard him say, "*I am going to the National Assembly.*" Two ranks of guards now arrived, and we set out in the order before mentioned. We passed through all the apartments.

'The King, as we were passing through the ante-room called the *œil-de-bœuf*, took the hat of the national guardsman who was march-

ing on his right hand and put his own hat, with a white feather, on the guard's head; the man was surprised, took the King's hat off his head and placed it under the same arm which carried his musket.'—p. 370.

As M. Rœderer notices that the King's hat had a white feather, and says nothing about the *tricolor cockade*, we presume it had not one. It was probably, remembering the mortification of the *bonnet rouge* on the 20th of June, that, in order to save himself from any affront as to the cockade, he took the hat of the National Guard:—

'When we were at the bottom of the great stairs the King said to me—I being immediately before him—"*What is to become of all the persons whom we have left above?*" "Sire, they are, I believe, all in coloured clothes—those who have swords have only to take them off, follow you, and get away by the garden." "*That's true*," said the King. A little farther on in the vestibule the King again said, "*But, after all, there seems to be no crowd in the Carrousel.*" "Sire, the fauxbourgs are on the point of arriving—all the sections are in arms—they are of one mind with the municipality—and, moreover, we have neither numbers nor disposition to resist even the assemblage already in the Carrousel. They have twelve pieces of cannon."'—p. 370.

In all this there was a great deal of exaggération—the popular force was not *yet* so formidable, and we shall see by-and-by that—an hour later—neither these 'cannon,' nor the reinforcements, which kept pouring in, could prevent the Swiss from clearing the Carrousel.

'When we had reached the garden of the Tuileries and the trees opposite the Café des Feuillans we walked upon the leaves which had fallen thick in the night, and the gardeners had swept up in heaps on the very line which our march took; we were knee-deep in them. "What a quantity of leaves!" said the King—"*they fall early this year!*" This was in allusion to a phrase recently published by Manuel in one of the journals, that the King would not last beyond the fall of the leaf.'—p. 371.

This little incident is worthy of notice, because it shows a *sensibility* in the King which Rœderer, who did not understand his manner, seems inclined on other occasions to deny him.

'One of my colleagues observed to me that the little prince amused himself with kicking the heaps of leaves between the legs of those who walked before him.'—p. 371.

We wonder that, when M. Rœderer thinks it worth while to

record such an *observation* as this, he did not mention that in this short *trajet* to the Assembly the Queen's pocket was picked of her watch and her purse, which obliged her to borrow a few louis from one of her waiting-women,* and that this loan to her fallen mistress was the cause of the poor woman's tragical death a short time after. At all events, we may be satisfied, by M. Rœderer's recording such trifles as this about the Dauphin's little pranks, that, if the conduct of the whole royal family in this extreme trial had not been full of decency and dignity, he is not the man who would have concealed or palliated any unfavourable circumstance.

'I suggested to the King, that, as the Queen and royal family had no stated places in the National Assembly, it would be proper to apprise it of the circumstances which were bringing them thither, and I proposed that the President of the Department should precede us, and explain the matter at the bar. I also observed that the King's guard could not ascend the *terrace des Feuillans*, because it was within the purlieus of the Assembly (whence all armed force was excluded by law), and I sent on to desire the head of the column to stop at the foot of the steps which led to the *passage des Feuillans*. As our progress was very slow, a deputation from the Assembly had time to meet the King in the garden, about twenty-five paces from the terrace; the President addressed him in nearly these words:—"*Sire, the National Assembly, anxious to contribute to your safety, offers you and your family an asylum within its own body.*" From this time I ceased to walk before the King; the deputation surrounded him, and I and the Department fell into the rear of the group composed of the royal family and the ministers. When we had come within a few paces of the terrace the steps were crowded with men and women in a great state of agitation. One of these men carried a pole eight or ten feet long—he was very violent against the King; and there was near him another man still more violent—"*No*," they cried, "*they shall not enter the National Assembly; they are the cause of all our misfortunes—there must be an end on't—down, down with them!*" The most alarming gestures accompanied these exclamations. I advanced, and, standing on the fourth step of the stairs, I said, "Citizens, in the name of the *law*, I demand silence!" —they were silent—I proceeded—"*Citizens*, you appear disposed to prevent the entrance of the King and his family into the National Assembly. The King has his proper place there in virtue of the constitution, and his family have been just authorised, by a special decree, to come there. There is the deputation of the Assembly sent to invite the King, who will confirm what I say." "We attest

* Madame Auguié, the sister of Madame Campan.

it," said a deputy. On this the general opposition seemed to give way; but the fellow with the long pole still brandished it, crying, "*Down with them—down with them!*" I went upon the terrace, seized the pole from the man and threw it down into the garden; he was astonished and silenced, and slunk away into the crowd.'—p. 372.

Here we see, that, for *his own object*—to convey the King to the Assembly—M. Rœderer could exert a spirit—very different from the pusillanimity and despondence which he exhibited at the Tuileries. The same spirit which disarmed the man with the pole would, if exerted on a larger scale, have, we are satisfied, deterred, and, if persisted in, defeated, the attack of the Tuileries; but Rœderer's mission was to bring about the captivity of the King, and not his destruction.

'We had now to pass across the terrace, and through the dense crowd that filled it, while the special guard of the Assembly only commenced at the passage leading into the Assembly; I therefore asked the consent of the deputies that the King's guard should advance as far as the passage. They consented, and the guards formed two lines across the terrace, through which the royal family passed without impediment. At the entrance of the passage were several men of the guard of the Assembly, and amongst them a native of *Provence*, who, walking on the King's left, said to him, with his strong country accent, "*Sire, don't be afraid,—we are good people; but we won't submit to be betrayed any longer. 'Be a good citizen, Sire, and don't forget to expel the* Calotins [clergy] *from the palace. Don't forget.*" It was a fit time, forsooth, to make a memorandum to that effect.' The King, however, replied with good humour.

'He now entered the Assembly—he first—I next; there was a crowd in the corridor which prevented the Queen and her son, from whom she would not be separated, from following the King. I entered the *hall* [*la salle*, the place of sitting of the Assembly], and asked permission to introduce, for a moment, the National Guards (the greatest part of whom were in fact the guards of the Assembly), who stopped up the passage, and were prevented by the crowd from retreating, so as to make way. At this proposal a strong expression of displeasure burst from that part of the Assembly called the *Mountain*. I understood that they supposed that there was a conspiracy against the Assembly, and that it was with some criminal design that I proposed to introduce the King's guard. I observed that M. Thuriot and M. Cambon were among the most violent. They talked of impeaching me. M. Cambon exclaimed, addressing me personally, that "*he held me responsible for any attempt which should be made against the national representatives.*" Instead of answering, I made half a dozen National Guards, without arms, advance to clear the

passage; and at that moment a grenadier with the prince royal in his arms entered the hall and placed the child on the table of the secretaries, which produced applauses; the Queen and the rest of the family advanced to the table; the King, the royal family, and the ministers now placed themselves in the seats reserved for the ministry.

'The King addressed the Assembly:—"I am come hither to prevent (*éviter*) a great crime; and I think I can be nowhere more secure than, gentlemen, in the midst of you." The President replied, "You may reckon, Sir, on the firmness of the National Assembly; the members have *sworn* to die in defence of the rights of the people and *the constituted* authorities.'—p. 374.

The frequent oaths of *fidelity to the Constitution and constituted authorities* had received a striking and general *confirmation* so recently as the 3rd July, when the Assembly, in a burst of unanimous enthusiasm, took an oath of *abjuration and execration against a* REPUBLIC. Within five weeks that same Assembly swore, with like magnanimity and enthusiasm, *eternal fidelity to the Republic!* Such are popular assemblies!

'The King now took his seat next the President. A member observes that the constitution forbids deliberation in the presence of the King. The box of the logographes [reporters] is suggested as a situation for the royal family, and they are placed there.

'I then appeared at the bar, where my colleagues of the Department had remained ever since the King's arrival, and I made to the Assembly, in their name, the following report—if, indeed, words uttered in such agitation and fatigue as I was suffering under can be called a report.'—p. 374.

Here follows a long and interesting report of the preceding transactions, but, as it is to be found *in extenso* in the Moniteur and all the publications of the time, we do not repeat it here. We shall only state that it affords a clear and irresistible train of evidence to show that the movement was not a mere attack on the *palace*, but on the persons of the royal family and on the Monarchical *Constitution*,—that it was encouraged by the principal authorities,—and that on the part of the King, his family, or his friends, it was *utterly unprovoked*. M. Rœderer proceeds to state, that, at the conclusion of his report.

'the President replied—"The National Assembly has heard with the greatest interest the narrative you have given. *It will take into consideration the petition you have presented*, and invites you to the honours of the sitting."'—p. 378.

Our readers will have observed that there was *no* '*petition*' on this occasion; but these were words of course which the regulations had provided to be used by the President on all occasions—not foreseeing any address from the bar but a *petition*. A former President, having taken upon himself on some occasion, a few days before, to vary the form into something more appropriate to the circumstances, had been severely censured, which no doubt occasioned the adherence to the ceremonial in this unsuitable case. M. Rœderer does not notice this incongruity, yet it is characteristic of the disorder, inconsistency, and cowardice of *all* the constituted authorities of the time, and of the miserable attention that the Revolutionists affected to pay to words and *forms*, when everything substantial was disregarded, or—if it offered any impediment to their proceedings—impudently overthrown.

'My colleagues and I now crossed the hall to the benches reserved for those invited to the sittings; but, supposing that I should be seen there with an evil eye by those members who had talked of impeaching me, I was proceeding to the door of exit, when several voices from the Mountain recalled me, and insisted that I should remain during sitting. I then ascended the benches and sat down.

'At this moment a municipal officer and an adjutant of the National Guard appeared at the bar; they announced that the assemblage in the Carrousel had made their way into the court of the palace, and planted and pointed their cannon against the building, and seemed disposed to take it by force.

'The Assembly immediately deputed twenty members to harangue the crowd, and to employ all modes of persuasion to restore order and to ensure the safety of persons and properties. Twelve other members were also sent to the Commune to confer with it upon the means of maintaining order. Up to that moment everything was indicative in the Assembly of the most constitutional dispositions, and these would certainly have continued but for the events which suddenly and unexpectedly occurred.'—p. 378.

This seems to us, like most of M. Rœderer's '*obiter dicta*,' entirely erroneous, and founded only on his own narrow views and partialities. He and his friends *might* think it constitutional to intimidate the King to re-accepting a Girondin ministry; but it seems a strange moment to insist on the *constitutional* spirit of the Assembly, when it had just decided to oppose a mob avowedly in arms to overthrow the Constitution, by *harangues* and *persuasion* only, and when it—the supreme legislature—sent a *deputation* to the *rebel Commune* of Paris, which had during the night expelled the lawful magistrates, and not only usurped their power,

but turned it to the vehement support of the insurrection. M. Rœderer talks as if he was still in a *fool's paradise*, dreaming about the *Constitution;* but from the moment that he had dragged the King from his palace, to be shut up in the reporters' box at the Assembly, it was either idiotcy or irony to talk of the 'Constitution,' and we shall show presently that it was contumelious irony.

'Cannon were now heard. The twenty deputies returned, declaring that the people would not allow them to proceed to the palace, for fear, they said, of exposing them to the *fire of the assassins.*' The sound of the cannon now redoubled—fearful cries filled the gardens of the Tuileries. An officer of the National Guard ran in, exclaiming, "We are overpowered." The galleries, which saw by the windows into the garden, cried, "There are the Swiss." Some firing of musketry was now heard along the Terrace des Feuillans. Petitioners now crowded to the bar, asserting that the Swiss had fired on the citizens, after having inveigled them to approach. They demanded the *déchéance* of the King—his *trial*—his DEATH. Their fury was extreme. "We demand the *déchéance*," said one body of petitioners—"that is, we confine ourselves to requiring the *déchéance—but have the courage to swear that you will save the State.*" "We swear it," cried the Assembly; and from that moment was neither free itself, nor master of the fate of the King.

'Here ended the Fifty Days—the chronicle of which I had undertaken to write.'—p. 379.

We have given the foregoing chapter to M. Rœderer's 'Chronicle' at full length, and we have given no more, because it relates to the only portion of the events of the *fifty* days in which he was individually implicated, and of which he is now probably the sole surviving witness. Those of our readers who have the history of the Revolution present to their memories will have seen that M. Rœderer adds nothing to our previous knowledge of the general features of the *Tenth of August*. It might naturally be expected that the unjust prepossessions with which he originally entered the palace—the insincerity, or at least the inconsistency, of the part he had to play—and his subsequent connexion with, and obligations to the victorious party—would have biassed his mind and his pen against the royal family; but such was their admirable and irreproachable conduct, and such, we willingly add, is the candour of M. Rœderer, that there are very few expressions of which even a royalist would complain, and scarcely a statement, except as to his own conduct, which requires correction. On other points M. Rœderer's offences are not of commission, but of

omission—he is erroneous, not in *fact* but in *feeling*—he tells, perhaps, nothing but the truth, but he does not tell all the truth—he states minutely enough whatever he thinks favourable to his own case, but he takes little notice of a variety of other persons and circumstances which influenced, though not in so great a degree as M. Rœderer, the events of that night; and the way in which his anti-royalist bias most strongly shows itself is in the dry, cool, and almost sneering spirit in which he saw and records scenes of such pathetic heroism as would have touched the heart and softened the style of any one but a *doctrinaire*.

It is, however, fair to recollect that M. Rœderer professes to write only a *chronicle*, and a chronicle, moreover, limited to *his own* share of the transactions, and with a view to the defence of *his own individual* character. This in strictness may be a sufficient excuse, but it is a dry hard line, to which no man of *feeling* would have adhered—and we will even say that his own conduct cannot be fairly estimated without a fuller exhibition of the emotions and sentiments—the fears—the hopes—the courage—the weakness—by which he was surrounded, and which ought to have had their respective influences on his conduct. The truth we are convinced is, that he takes slight notice of such circumstances, because he knows that they had little to do with his determination. *That* had been already taken in the councils of the Palais Royal or the Gironde, and Rœderer's mission was, we have no doubt, 'to *drag* the King to the Assembly'—by advice—by persuasion—by intimidation—*any how*. Without taking upon ourselves to censure too decidedly this policy, which had at least the *momentary* merit of removing the King from the scene of the conflict, we may be allowed to express our distaste of the mean and fraudulent spirit in which it was conceived and executed.

As to the prudence of a different course and the probabilities of the success of resistance, they can now be but matters of argument and opinion; but as we live in times in which similar questions have been and may again be brought to practical experiment,* it may not be useless shortly to consider the subject. It suited M. Rœderer's policy to think, on the 10th August, that all resistance was impossible. We have seen, however, that on the 20th June, when he was a more impartial judge, he was of a

* This was prophetic. The 24th February, 1848, was to a wonderful degree, and even in its minor details, a repetition of the 10th August, 1792.

quite contrary opinion, and alleged his own experience in the case of Metz, where 600 men, without the shelter and advantage which the Tuileries would have afforded its defenders, repelled 6000 assailants. In the next place, it is admitted on all hands that the very project of the insurrection was founded upon, and its execution confided to, the battalion of *Marseillais*, who did not exceed 800. It is certain, too, that, whether from pusillanimity or from better feelings, the Parisians could not have been brought to assault, except in the train of the Marseillais. Equally certain it is, that when, after the retreat of the King, the Marseillais and their followers had advanced into the courts,—possessed themselves of the guns,—occupied the very vestibule of the palace,—and had there murdered five of the Swiss on the staircase—when, we say, under all these disadvantages, the Swiss were driven, in the extremities of self-defence, to retort hostilities and to attack the assailants, the *Marseillais and their supporters were utterly defeated.* This is undeniable—and M. Rœderer not only admits but corroborates it by the evidence of an eye-witness, whose authority on such a point as this is equally unquestionable and interesting :—

'Napoleon told me, in the month of December, 1813, that he was present at the affair. "As an officer of artillery, Sire?" I asked. "*No*," said he; "*as an amateur. The Swiss* [who had in their first sally retaken the guns] *served the artillery vigorously. In ten minutes the Marseillais were driven back as far as the Rue de l'Echelle* [that is, not only out of the courts of the palace, but out of the Carrousel], *and only came back after the Swiss had retreated by the King's order!*"'—p. 405.

All this is decisive as to the facts as they were; but how much more effective would the resistance of the Swiss have been if it had been made under the eyes of the King—by order of the magistrates—at the command of their proper officers, and supported and aided by the National Guards, of whom two or three battalions were stanch to the last, and the greater part of whom would probably have been so if they had been encouraged by the constituted authorities!

But, on the other hand, we do not deny to M. Rœderer that there was an enormous risk—and that few men would have ventured to incur the fearful responsibility of exposing not merely the Royal Family but a great palace—full, not of soldiers, but of women and old men, servants, and other non-combatants—to the chances of an assault. Besides M. Rœderer was not in any way responsible for the King's conduct—his Majesty's ministers were all present, and should not have allowed Rœderer to interfere in

what was really the business of his constitutional advisers. And after all it must be confessed that it would have required an infinitely more powerful mind than Rœderer possessed, either to have inspired the King himself with an energy adequate to the emergency, or to have assumed the burden of saving his Majesty in spite of himself. Passive courage, the fortitude of suffering, the King possessed in the highest degree, but he had no personal energy and little speech, and the danger of his wife and family unnerved him, as it might have done more energetic men; and he had, above all, a fixed determination—laudable in feeling, but fatal in practice—to suffer anything rather than have recourse to bloodshed. On the 4th August one of his old ministers, M. de Montmorin, showed him the approaching danger, and urged him, as the only means of avoiding an actual conflict, to leave Paris under the escort of the Swiss and of his still numerous friends, the King, after some consideration, replied—

'No; I am less afraid of the *personal danger with which I am threatened than of a civil war.*'—*Peltier*, ii. 293.

That amiable but erroneous feeling produced all the misery—and in an aggravated extreme—that it desired to avoid; and, whatever may have been the political motives of M. Rœderer's conduct, it is, we think, impossible to deny that, *considering the personal character of the King* and the posture of affairs at the moment, the retreat to the Assembly was—after the murder of Mandat—the most prudent course which could be adopted. But we have no approbation to express of M. Rœderer's share in the events which produced this crisis, and we cannot but deplore that, when he quitted the palace with his appointed prey, he did not, agreeably to the King's humane suggestion, take some measures to prevent a collision between the hostile parties,—to ensure the safe retreat of the faithful Swiss, and to protect the lives of the crowd of non-combatants who were left behind in the palace. He might not have been successful in such an effort—but he ought to have made it—or at least, when he was writing an apology for his share in the 10th of August, he ought to have explained by what overpowering control he was prevented from making even the slightest exertion to save the palace and its defenceless inhabitants from plunder and massacre.

ESSAY V.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, JANUARY, 1823—SEPTEMBER, 1853.]*

THE CAPTIVITY IN THE TEMPLE.

1. *Private Memoirs of what passed in the Temple from the Imprisonment of the Royal Family to the Death of the Dauphin.* By Madame Royale, Duchess of Angoulême. 1853.
2. *Louis XVII., sa Vie, son Agonie, sa Mort; Captivité de la Famille Royale au Temple, ouvrage enrichi d'Autographes, de Portraits, et de Plans.* Par M. A. de Beauchesne. 2 vols. Paris. 1852.

THE deep obscurity that covered the last eighteen months of the life of the son of Louis XVI., and the mystery in which his death and burial were so strangely and, as it seemed, so studiously involved, gave to the general sympathy that his fate naturally excited an additional and somewhat of a more romantic interest. Of the extent of this feeling we have evidence more conclusive than respectable in the numerous pretenders that have successively appeared to claim identity with him. We really forget how many there have been of these '*Faux Dauphins*,' but four—of the names of Hervagault, Bruneau, Naundorf, and Richemont—played their parts with a degree of success that confirms the observation that, however great the number of *knaves* in the world may be, they are always sure to find an ample proportion of *fools* and *dupes*. Not one of those cases appeared to us to have reached even the lowest degree of probability, nor would they be worth mentioning but that they seem to have stimulated the zeal of M. A. de Beauchesne

* This essay originally appeared as two articles, at an interval of thirty years, but the identity of the subject, and to a great extent of the matter, of the two works reviewed, has made it both necessary and easy to run them together.

to collect all the evidence that the fury of the revolution and the lapse of time might have spared, as to the authentic circumstances of his life and death in the Tower of the Temple.

M. de Beauchesne states that a great part of his own life has been dedicated to this object. He has—he tells us—made himself familiar with all the details of that mediæval prison-house; he has consulted all the extant records of the public offices which had any connexion with the service of the Temple—he has traced out and personally communicated with every surviving individual who had been employed there, and he has even sought secondhand and hearsay information from the octogenarian neighbours and acquaintances of those who were no more. This statement would lead us to expect more of novelty and originality than we have found—for, in truth, M. de Beauchesne has added little—we may almost say nothing essential—to what had been already so copiously detailed in the respective memoirs of MM. Hue, Cléry, and Turgy, and of the Duchess d'Angoulême, who were inmates of the Temple, and in the *Mémoires Historiques* of M. Eckard, which is a judicious and interesting summary of all the fore-named authorities. From these well-known works M. de Beauchesne borrows full three-fourths of his volumes, and, though he occasionally cites them, he does not acknowledge the extent of his obligations—particularly to M. Eckard—as largely as we think he should have done. An ordinary reader is too frequently at a loss to distinguish what rests on M. de Beauchesne's assertions from what he copies from others. This uncertainty—very inconvenient in an historical work—is seriously increased by his style of writing, which is so *ampoulé* and rhetorical as sometimes to leave us in doubt whether he is speaking literally or metaphorically: for instance, in detailing the pains he has taken, and his diligent examination of persons and places from which he could hope any information, he exclaims,—

'*For twenty years I shut myself up in that tower—I lived in it*—traversed all its stairs and apartments, nay, pried into every hole and corner about it.'

Who would suppose that M. de Beauchesne never was in the Tower at all—perhaps never saw it!—for it was demolished by Buonaparte, and the site built over, near fifty years ago. He only means that his *fancy* has inhabited the Tower, &c., in the same sense that he afterwards says,—

'I have repeopled it—I have *listened* to the sighs and sobs of the victims—I have *read* from the writings on the walls the complaints, the pardons, the farewells!—I have *heard* the echoes repeating these wailings.'

Such a style may not be, we admit, inconsistent with the truth of his narrative, but it renders it vague and suspicious, and contrasts very disagreeably with the more interesting simplicity of the original works to which we have referred.

M. de Beauchesne flatters himself that he is neither credulous nor partial. We think he is somewhat of both, though we entertain no doubt of his sincerity. We distrust his judgment, but not his good faith. Indeed, the most valuable of his elucidations are the documents which he has copied from the revolutionary archives, and which speak for themselves; and, on the whole, the chief merit that we can allow to his work is that it collects and brings together—with some additional explanation and confirmation—all that is known—all perhaps that can be known—of that melancholy and, to France, disgraceful episode in her history—the Captivity of the Temple, and especially of the life and death of Louis XVII.

Louis Charles, the second son and fourth child of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, was born at Versailles on the 27th of March, 1785, and received the title of *Duke of Normandy*. On the death of his elder brother (who was born in 1781, and died in 1789, at the outset of the Revolution) he became heir-apparent to the Throne, but, in fact, heir to nothing but persecution, misfortune, and martyrdom. Less partial pens than M. de Beauchesne's describe the child as extremely handsome, large blue eyes, delicate features, light hair curling naturally, limbs well formed, rather tall for his years, with a sweet expression of countenance not wanting in either intelligence or vivacity—to his family he seemed a little angel—to the Court a wonder—to all the world a very fine and promising boy. We not only forgive, but can assent to, M. de Beauchesne's metaphorical lament over him as a lily broken by a storm and withered in its earliest bloom.*

Within *two hours* after the death of the first Dauphin (on the 4th of June, 1789) the Revolution began to exhibit its disregard of not merely the Royal authority, but of the ordinary dictates of

* This image had been before produced on a medal struck in 1816 by M. Tirolier under the auspices of M. de Châteaubriand, which represented *a lily broken by the storm*, with the legend *Cecidit ut flos.*—*Turgy*, 314.

humanity and the first feelings of nature. The Chamber of the *Tiers Etat*—it had not yet usurped the title of *National Assembly*—sent a deputation on business to the king, who had shut himself up in his private apartment to indulge his sorrow. When the deputation was announced, the King answered that this recent misfortune would prevent his receiving it *that day*. They rudely insisted on their right of audience as Representatives of the People: the King still requested to be spared: the demagogues were obstinate—and to a third and more peremptory requisition the unhappy father and insulted monarch was forced to yield, with, however, the touching reproof of asking—'Are there then *no fathers* among them?'

A month later the Bastille was taken, and on the 6th of October another insurrection stormed the Palace of Versailles, massacred the Guards, and led the Royal Family in captivity to Paris. We pass over the three years of persecution which they had to endure in the palace-prison of the Tuileries till the more tremendous insurrection and massacre of the 10th of August swept away even the mockery of monarchy and sent them prisoners to the Temple—an ancient fortress of the Knights Templars, built in 1212, into the dungeons of which, uninhabited for ages, and less fit for their decent reception than any common prison, they were promiscuously hurried.

Of this edifice, and its internal divisions and distributions for its new destiny, M. de Beauchesne has given us half-a-dozen plans, somewhat larger but hardly so satisfactory as we already possessed in Cléry's work. It was a huge and massive tower, not unlike 'the Tower of Julius, London's lasting shame,' and stood like it in a large inclosure of inferior and more modern constructions. One of these, though called the *Palace*, was in truth only the 'Hotel' of the *Prior of the Order*, in right of which nominal office it had been for several years the abode of the penultimate Prince de Conti, and is frequently mentioned in the letters of Walpole and Madame du Deffand, and all the Memoirs of the time. It was latterly the rarely occupied town residence of the Comte d'Artois. Here the Royal Family arrived at seven in the evening of Monday, the 13th of August, and supposed that they were to be lodged—the King even examined the apartments with a view to their future distribution; but this would have been too great an indulgence, and when bedtime came they were painfully surprised at being

transferred to the more inconvenient, rigorous, and, above all, *insulting* incarceration of the *Tower*.

The Tower was so surrounded by its own appurtenances and by the neighbouring houses that it was not easily visible from the adjoining streets, and it may be doubted whether any of its new inhabitants (unless perhaps the King) had ever set eyes on it. M. Hue (the King's valet-de-chambre) tells us that when he was conducted to it that night to prepare a bed for his master he had no idea what it was, and was lost in wonder at the dark and gigantic object, so different from anything he had seen before.

Though appearing to be one, and generally called the Tower, it was composed of two distinct parts. The greater of the two was a massive square, divided into five or six stories and above 150 feet high, exclusive of a lofty pyramidal roof, and it had at each of its four angles large circular turrets with conical roofs, so sharp that M. Hue at first mistook them for steeples. This tower had been of old the *keep*—the treasury and arsenal of the knights, and was accessible only by a single small door in one of the turrets, opening on a winding stone staircase. The door was so low that when the Queen, after the King's death, was torn from her children, and dragged through it to her last prison in the Conciergerie, she struck her forehead violently against it. On being asked if she was hurt, she only said, '*Nothing can hurt me now.*' This portion of the tower had in later times merely served as a depository for lumber. The second division of the edifice, called, when any distinction was made, the *Little Tower*, was attached, but without any internal communication, to the north side of its greater neighbour; it was a narrow oblong, with smaller turrets at its salient angles. Both the towers had in a marked degree the dungeon character of their age, but the lesser had been subdivided into apartments for the residence of the Keeper of the Archives of the Order. It was into this side of the building, scantily supplied by the modest furniture of the archivist, that the Royal Family were offensively crowded during two or three months, while internal alterations—wholly inadequate for comfort or even decency, and ridiculously superfluous as to security—were in progress in the large tower, destined for their ultimate reception. The Gothic dungeon was not, however, thought sufficiently secure; bars, bolts, and blinds additionally obscured the embrasure windows—doors of ancient oak were made thicker or reinforced with iron, and new ones were put up on the

corkscrew stairs already difficult enough to mount. The Abbé Edgeworth, who attended the King in his last moments, thus describes the access to his apartment:—

'I was led across the court to the door of the tower, which, though very narrow and very low, was so overcharged with iron bolts and bars that it opened with a horrible noise. I was conducted up winding stairs so narrow that two persons would have difficulty in getting past each other. At short distances these stairs were cut across by barriers, at each of which was a sentinel—these sentinels were all true *sans-culottes*, generally drunk—and their atrocious acclamations, re-echoed by the vast vaults which covered every story of the tower, were really terrifying.'

Considerable works were also undertaken for external security. The Towers were isolated by the destruction of all the lesser buildings immediately near them, and the walls round the whole inclosure were strengthened and raised. The execution of the plans was intrusted, as a boon for his revolutionary zeal, to a mason who had acquired the distinctive appellation of the *Patriot* Palloy by the noisy activity which he displayed in the removal of the ruins of the Bastille, for which he had obtained a contract. On the subject of these works a remark of the young Prince is related by M. de Beauchesne, which may be taken as one example out of many of the caution with which his anecdotes must be received. When told that Palloy was the person employed to raise the walls, the Prince is reported to have observed that '*it was odd that he who had become so famous for levelling one prison should be employed to build another.*'* The observation, though obvious enough, seems to us above a child of that age, and, moreover, we find it made by *M. Hue as his own* in a *note* in his memoirs, and he certainly cannot be suspected of pilfering a *bon mot* from the Dauphin.

The selection of this dungeon for the Royal Family, and the

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* It is worth observing that at the taking of the *Bastille* on the 14th July, 1789, there were found but six or seven prisoners, three of them *insane*, who were afterwards sent to madhouses; the rest for forgery and scandalous offences unfit for public trial. There was no *state prisoner*. On the 27th of the same month of July, in *the fifth year of liberty*, 1794, the prisons of Paris contained 8913 prisoners: to this number must be added 2637, who had passed *in the preceding year* from the prisons to the scaffold. When Buonaparte demolished the Temple, which he had previously used as a state prison, there were seventeen prisoners removed to Vincennes.

wanton and almost incredible brutality with which from first to last they were all treated by their various jailers, constitute altogether a systematic series of outrages which we have never seen satisfactorily, nor even probably, accounted for. The heads of the King, Queen, and Madame Elizabeth fell, we know, in the desperate struggle of Brissot, Roland, Danton, and Robespierre to take each other's and to save their own. But why these royal victims, and after them the two children, should have been deprived of the common decencies and necessaries of life—why they should have been exposed to the most sordid wants, to the lowest personal indignities, to the vulgar despotism of people taken (as it were for the purpose) from the lowest orders of society—that is the enigma; and this is our conjectural explanation.

The National Assembly which had sent the King to prison, and its successor, the Convention, which deposed him, seemed to the eyes of the world sufficiently audacious, tyrannical, and brutal, but there was a power which exceeded them in all such qualities, and under which those terrible Assemblies themselves quailed and trembled—the COMMUNE or Common Council of the City of Paris. To this corporation, which arose out of the 10th of August, and directed the massacres of September, the Convention as a body owed its existence, and its most prominent Members their individual elections. Inflated with these successes, it arrogated to itself, under its modest *municipal* title, a power insultingly independent even of the Assembly and the Government. It was composed, with rare exceptions, of tradesmen of a secondary order—men only known even in their own low circles by the blind and noisy violence of their *patriotism*—by a rancorous enmity to all that they called aristocracy, and by the most intense and ignorant prejudices against the persons and characters of the Royal Family. To the tender mercies of these vulgar, illiterate, and furious demagogues that family was implicitly delivered over—*they* it was that, contrary to the original intention of the Convention and its Ministers, assigned the Tower of the Temple as the royal prison—they it was that named *from amongst themselves* all the official authorities, that selected them for their brutality, and charged them with the most capricious jealousy, so as to ensure not merely the safe custody of the prisoners, but the wanton infliction of every kind of personal indignity. And to such a degree of insolent independence had they arrived, that even Committees of the Convention which visited

the Temple on special occasions were controlled, contradicted, rebuked, and set at defiance by the shoemakers, carpenters, and chandlers who happened to be for the moment the delegates of the *Commune*. The parties in the Convention were so perilously struggling for the destruction of each other, that they had neither leisure nor courage to grapple with the Commune, and they all—and especially the more moderate, already trembling for their own heads—were not sorry to leave to those obscure agents the responsibility and odium of such a persecution.

> 'Assensere omnes; et quæ sibi quisque timebat,
> Unius in miseri exitium conversa tulere.
> Jamque dies infanda aderat!'

But the *infanda dies*—the 21st January—in which they all thus concurred, did not save the Girondins from the 31st October—not the Dantonists from the 16th Germinal—nor Robespierre himself from the Neuf Thermidor!

To the usurped, but conceded supremacy of the Commune, and the vulgar habits and rancorous feeling of the majority of its members, may, we suspect, be more immediately attributed the otherwise inexplicable brutalities of the Temple.

The published memoirs of M. Hue who attended the King as valet-de-chambre for the first three weeks of his confinement in the Temple, and those of M. Cléry who succeeded to the same duty, and worthily performed it to the morning of the martyrdom, afford us an authentic and afflicting detail of the sufferings of all the royal personages during their respective attendances, but the most interesting as well as the most authentic detail of the whole captivity, are the Memoirs which stand first in the title of this Essay, written by MADAME ROYALE, afterwards *Duchess d'Angoulême*, who only of the Royal Family survived to tell the tremendous secrets of that prison-house.

Her name does not indeed appear in the title-page, but she avowed the work; and there is hardly a page which does not afford internal evidence of its authenticity.

The notes from which it has been composed were either made, we are informed, at the moment by stealth, and with pencils which her Royal Highness contrived to conceal from her persecutors, or were added immediately after her release from prison. It is therefore not to be judged of as a literary composition.

It will be observed that several passages are obscure, and one or two contradictory: there are frequent repetitions, and a general want of arrangement. All these, which would be defects in a regular history, increase the value of this Journal: they attest its authenticity, and forcibly impress on our minds the cruel circumstances of perplexity and anxiety under which it was written; and the negligence and disorder, if one may use the expression, in which the Princess appears before us, *become* her misery better than a more careful and ornamented attire.

It is a great proof of her good taste, as well as of her conscientious veracity, that she did not permit any polishing hand to smooth down the colloquial simplicity of her style, and the irregular, but forcible touches of her expression. It will, however, be observed, on a comparison with the narrative of the flight to Varennes, that the Princess, when she wrote these later Memoirs, had acquired a greater facility of expression, and a wider range of reflection.

There are some little differences on minor points between her Royal Highness's account and those of M. Hue and Cléry. These might have been easily corrected or omitted: but, again, we think the Duchess, or whoever has edited the work, has acted with perfect good taste and judgment, in leaving these passages as they were originally written. Those who will take the trouble to compare hers with the two other accounts will see that these trifling variances (and they are very trifling), instead of invalidating, support the credit of all the narrators, and prove that they all faithfully record the information which they severally received.

The Princess's little volume should, to produce its full effect, be read continuously—no extracts or abridgment can do it justice. We with our present view can only refer to it occasionally as an historical document to confirm, explain, or correct the general statements given in the other narratives of the Captivity of the Temple.

Of the wanton and brutal cruelty with which they were to be treated and of the fate to which they were destined, the royal sufferers had an early and bitter foretaste. It will be recollected that the Princess de Lamballe, the dearest personal friend and first official attendant on the Queen, was massacred at the prison of *La Force*, on the morning of the 3rd of September; that her body was exposed, insulted, and mutilated in the most indecent and the

most ferocious manner; her head stuck on a pike, with its beautiful hair streaming out as the flag of the popular victory, was paraded for the livelong day through Paris; and especially exhibited at the Palais Royal to the eyes of her brother-in-law the Duke of Orleans, and at the hotel of her venerable father-in-law, the Duke de Penthièvre, who adored the widow of his only son; but the murderers thought their vengeance incomplete, if the merciful walls of their dungeons should save the prisoners of the Temple from the horrors and terror of this shocking spectacle.

Madame Royale thus describes this incident:—

'The 3rd of September Manuel came to assure the King that Madame de Lamballe, and all the other persons who had been removed from the Temple, were well, and in security together, in the prison of La Force. At three o'clock, just after dinner, and as the King was sitting down to tric-trac with the Queen (which he played for the purpose of having an opportunity of saying a few words to her unheard by the keepers), the most horrid shouts were heard. The officer who happened to be on guard in the room behaved well: he shut the door and the window, and even drew the curtains, to prevent their seeing anything; but, on the outside, the workmen, and the gaoler, Rocher, joined the assassins, and increased the tumult.

'Several officers of the [National] guard and of the municipality now arrived: the former insisted that the king should show himself at the windows; fortunately the latter opposed it; but, on his Majesty's asking what was the matter, a young officer of the guard replied, "Well! since you will know, it is the head of Madame de Lamballe that they want to show you." At these words the Queen was overcome with horror; it was the only occasion in which her firmness abandoned her. The municipal officers were very angry with this young man; but the King, with his usual goodness, excused him, saying, that it was not the officer's fault, but his own, since he had questioned him.'

We interrupt the narrative for a moment to record an anecdote honourable to the memory of the poor King, whose awkward manners too often obscured the native goodness of his heart. When M. de Malesherbes was allowed to see him in the last days of his life, he found that Louis still retained a lively impression of gratitude for the officer who had saved him from this sight. He had inquired his name and remembered it. 'And who,' said M. de Malesherbes, 'was the other?' 'Oh,' replied the King, '*I did*

not want to know that.' A phrase that we venture to call sublime in its simplicity.

'The noise lasted till five o'clock. The prisoners learned that the people had wished to force the door, and that the municipal officers had been enabled to prevent it only by putting a tricoloured scarf across it, and by allowing six of the murderers to march round the tower with the head of the princess, leaving at the door her body, which they would have dragged in also. When this deputation entered, Rocher shouted for joy, and brutally insulted a young man who turned sick with horror at this spectacle.

'It was hardly over, when Pétion, instead of exerting himself to stop the massacres, coolly sent his secretary to the King with some money. This man was very ridiculous, and said a thousand things which at another moment would have made one laugh. He thought the Queen was standing up out of respect for him; because, since this dreadful scene, *she had remained standing and motionless, perfectly insensible* of all that was going on. The municipal officer, who had given his scarf to tie across the door, took care to make Cléry pay him the value.

'The drum continued to beat to arms all night, and the two princesses, who could not sleep, *listened to the sobs of the Queen*, which never ceased.'

What a picture is here of this tragic Malvolio, who imagined that the form, congealed by grief and horror which stood statue-like before him, was immovable out of respect to him! What poet ever represented a more intense misery than is told in the few words that in the sleepless wretchedness of that night the only distraction of the princesses was listening to the *sobs of the Queen!*

While every rumour that reached them from without was fraught with affliction and despair, the internal regime of the prison subjected the captives to every species of constraint, privation, and insult that the jealous malignity of the Commune, or the capricious brutality of its tools could accumulate. M. de Beauchesne has found in the archives of that body an early instance, which we quote the rather because it was not a mere individual or accidental, but an official deliberation. In reading it, we must keep in remembrance the peculiar character of the prison.

'*Commune de Paris*, 29*th Sept.* 1792, *the fourth year of Liberty, and first of Equality and the Republic.*

Considering that the custody of the prisoners of the Temple becomes every day more difficult by the concert and designs which they may

form amongst themselves, the Council General of the Commune feel it their imperious duty to prevent the abuses which might facilitate the *evasion* of those traitors: they therefore decree—

'1. That Louis and Antoinette shall be separated.

'2. That each prisoner shall have a separate dungeon (*cachot*).

'3. That the valet-de-chambre shall be placed in confinement.

'4. That the citizen Hébert [the infamous Hébert, of whose crimes even Robespierre and Danton grew tired or afraid] shall be added to the five existing Commissaries.

'5. That this decree shall be carried into effect this evening—immediately—even to taking from them the plate and other table utensils (*argenterie et les accessoires de la bouche*). In a word, the Council General gives the Commissaries full power to do *whatever* their prudence may suggest for the safe custody of these *hostages*.'

Soup-spoons and silver forks *might facilitate evasion!*

In virtue of this decree the King was removed *that night* to the second story (the third, reckoning the ground floor) of the great tower (his family remaining in the smaller one), where no furniture had been prepared for his use but a temporary bed, while his *valet-de-chambre* sat up in a chair. The dispersion of the rest was postponed; and they were for some time permitted, not without difficulty, to dine with the King. A month later the ladies and children were also transferred to an apartment in the great tower, immediately *over* the King's. On the 26th October a fresh decree directed that the prince should be removed from his mother's to his father's apartment, under the pretext that the boy was too old (seven years and six months) to be left in the hands of women; but the real object was to afflict and insult the Queen.

For a short time after the whole family had been located in the great tower, though separated at night and for a great portion of the day, they were less unhappy—they had their meals together and were allowed to meet in the garden, though always strictly watched and habitually insulted. They bore all such outrages with admirable patience, and found consolation in the exercise of whatever was still possible of their respective duties. The King pursued a regular course of instruction for his son—in writing, arithmetic, geography, Latin, and the history of France—the ladies carried on the education of the young princess, and were reduced to the necessity of mending not only their own clothes, but even those of the King and prince; which, as these had each but one suit, Madame Elizabeth used to do after they were in bed.

This mode of life lasted only to the first week in December, when, with a view no doubt to the *infanda dies*, a new set of Commissaries was installed, who watched the prisoners *day and night* with increased insolence and rigour. At last, on the 11th December, the young prince was taken back to the apartment of his mother—the King was summoned to the bar of the Convention, and, on his return in the evening, was met by an order for his total separation from the whole of his family. The absurdity of such an order surprised, and its cruelty revolted, even *his* patience. He addressed a strong remonstrance to the Convention on the barbarous interdiction: that Assembly, on the 1st December, came to a resolution allowing him to communicate with his family; but it was hardly passed when it was objected to by Tallien, who audaciously announced that, even if they adhered to the vote, *the Commune would not obey it.* This was conclusive, and the debate terminated in a declaration 'that the King might, till the definitive judgment on his case, see his children, on condition, however, that *they should have no communication with either their mother or their aunt.*' The condition rendered the permission derisory as to his daughter, and the King was so convinced of the grief that a renewed separation from her son would cause to the Queen, that he sacrificed his own feelings, and the decree became, as it was meant to be, wholly inoperative. He never saw any of his family again till the eve of his death.

To what we already knew of that scene, M. de Beauchesne has added an anecdote new to us, for which he quotes *in his text* the direct authority of the Duchess of Angoulême:—

'My father, at the moment of parting from us for ever, made us promise never to think of avenging his death. He was well satisfied that we should hold sacred these his last instructions; but the extreme youth of my brother made him desirous of producing a still stronger impression on him. He took him on his knee and said to him, "My son, you have heard what I have said; but as an *oath* has something more sacred than words, *lift up your hand, and swear* that you will accomplish the last wish of your father." My brother obeyed, bursting out into tears, and this touching goodness redoubled ours.'

There can be no doubt that this anecdote represents truly the sentiments of the King—as he had already expressed them in that portion of his will which was specially addressed to his son—but

to us the somewhat dramatic scene here described seems quite irreconcilable with the age of the child or the sober simplicity of his father's character. Nor are we satisfied with M. de Beauchesne's statement of his authority; for, after giving it in the *text* as *directly* from the lips or pen of the Duchess d'Angoulême herself, he adds in a foot-note a reference to '*Fragments of unpublished Memoirs of the Duchess of Tourzel.*' But Cléry, who was an anxious eye-witness, and describes minutely the position and attitudes of all the parties, does not mention any such demonstration or gesture; and the Duchess's own written account, which will be found a few pages forward, seems to negative conclusively the *embroidered* anecdote of Madame de Tourzel and M. de Beauchesne.

The next day Louis XVI. ceased to live. He died under the eyes of a hundred thousand enemies and of but one solitary friend—his confessor; yet there was no second opinion in this hostile crowd as to the courage and dignity of his deportment from first to last, and it is only within these few years that we have heard insinuations, and even assertions (contradictory in themselves), that he exhibited both fear and fury—struggled with his executioner, and endeavoured to prolong the scene in the expectation of a rescue. We have against such injurious imputations the sacred evidence of that single friend—the official testimony of the Jacobin Commissioners, who were appointed to superintend the execution, and the acquiescence of the vast assemblage that encircled the scaffold. But M. de Beauchesne has discovered at once the source of this calumny and its complete refutation, in two contemporaneous documents, so curious in every way, that we think them worth producing *in extenso*, though the fact is already superabundantly established without them.

In a newspaper, called *Le Thermomètre du Jour*, of the 13th February, 1793 (*three weeks only after the execution*), there appeared this anecdote:—

'When the *condamné* ascended the scaffold' (it is Sanson the executioner himself who has related the fact, and who has employed the term *condamné*), 'I was surprised at his assurance and courage; but at the roll of the drums which drowned his voice at the movement of my assistants to lay hold of him, his countenance suddenly changed, and he exclaimed hastily three times, "*I am lost*" (*je suis perdu*)! This circumstance, corroborated by another which Sanson equally

narrated—namely that "the *condamné* had supped heartily the preceding evening and breakfasted with equal appetite that morning" —shows that to the very moment of his death he had reckoned on being saved. Those who kept him in this delusion had no doubt the design of giving him an appearance of courage that might deceive the spectators and posterity—but the roll of the drums dissipated this false courage, and contemporaries and posterity may now appreciate the real feelings of the guilty tyrant.'

We—who now know from the evidence of the Abbé Edgeworth and Cléry how the King passed that evening, night, and morning, and that the only *break of his fast* was by the reception of the Holy Communion—are dispensed from exposing the falsehood and absurdity of this statement; but it met an earlier and even more striking refutation.

Sanson (Charles Henry) was a man more civilized both in manners and mind than might be expected from his terrible occupation. On reading this article in the paper, Sanson addressed the following letter to the editor, which appeared in the *Thermomètre* of the 21st:—

'*Paris*, 20 *Feb.*, 1793, 1*st year of the French Republic.*

'Citizen—A short absence has prevented my sooner replying to your article concerning Louis Capet. But here is the exact truth as to what passed. On alighting from the carriage for execution, he was told that he must take off his coat. He made some difficulty, saying that they might as well execute him as he was. On [our] representation that that was impossible, he himself assisted in taking off his coat. He again made the same difficulty when his hands were to be tied, but he offered them himself when the person who accompanied him [his confessor] had told him that it was his last sacrifice [the Abbé Edgeworth had suggested to him that the Saviour had submitted to the same indignity]. Then he inquired whether the drums would go on beating as they were doing. We answered that we could not tell, and it was the truth. He ascended the scaffold, and advanced to the front as if he intended to speak; but we again represented to him that the thing was impossible. He then allowed himself to be conducted to the spot, when he was attached to the instrument and from which he exclaimed in a loud voice, "*People, I die innocent.*" Then turning round to us, he said, "Sir, I die innocent of all that has been imputed to me. I wish that my blood may cement the happiness of the French people."

'These, Citizen, were his last and exact words. The kind of

little debate which occurred *at the foot of the scaffold* turned altogether on his not thinking it necessary that his coat should be taken off, and his hands tied. He would also have wished to cut off his own hair. [He had wished to have it done early in the morning by Cléry, but the municipality would not allow him a pair of scissars.]

'And, as an homage to truth, I must add that he bore all this with a *sang froid* and firmness which astonished us all. I am convinced that he had derived this strength of mind from the principles of religion, of which no one could appear more persuaded and penetrated.

'You may be assured, Citizen, that there is the truth in its fullest light. I have the honour to be your fellow Citizen,—SANSON.'

This remarkable letter is made additionally interesting by some minute errors of orthography and grammar, which show that it was the unaided production of the writer. M. de Beauchesne adds that Sanson never assisted at another execution, and that he died, *within six months*, of remorse at his involuntary share in the royal murder. The last particular is contrary to all other authorities, and is a strong confirmation of the suspicion forced upon us that M. de Beauchesne is inclined to exaggerate, and, as he thinks, embellish the incidents of his story. Sanson did *not* die soon after the King's death, nor even retire from the exercise of his office till 1795, when he obtained the reversion for his son and a pension for himself (*Dubois, Mém. sur Sanson*). Mercier saw and describes him in the streets and theatres of Paris in 1799 (*Nouv. Tab.*, *c.* 102), and Dubois states that he died on the 4th of July, 1806. M. de Beauchesne follows up this certainly erroneous statement by another, which we fear is of the same class. He says that Sanson *left by his will* a sum for an expiatory mass for the soul of Louis XVI., to be celebrated on the 21st of January in every year; that his son and successor, Henry Sanson, who survived till the 22nd August, 1840, religiously provided for its performance in his parish church of St. Laurent; and when the Revolution of 1830 had repealed the public commemoration of the martyrdom, the private piety of the executioner continued to record *his* horror of the crime. M. de Beauchesne gives no authority for his statement, which, whatever probability it might have had if Sanson had made his will and died within a few months of the King's death, surely requires some confirmation when we find the supposed testator living a dozen years later. Here, as on too many other occasions,

we cannot but suspect that M. de Beauchesne's enthusiasm degenerates into credulity. Of the feelings of the principal sufferer at that awful crisis and of his still more suffering family, where could we have hoped to find any adequate account? Such things are generally buried in the silence and secrecy of domestic sorrow, but Madame d'Angoulême's notes admit us to a short, yet most interesting glimpse of what passed behind that black curtain.

'On the 19th January M. Malesherbes came to acquaint him that the sentence had been pronounced; "but, Sire," he added, "these wretches are not yet masters, and every honest man will endeavour to save your Majesty or to die at your feet." "M. de Malesherbes," said the King, "such proceedings would involve a great many persons, and would excite a civil war in Paris.—*I had rather die.**—You will therefore, I entreat of you, command them from me to make no effort to save me—the King of France never dies!"

'After this conference he was never allowed to see his counsel again. . . . .

'On Sunday, the 20th January, Garat, the minister of justice, and the other members of the executive power, came to announce to him the sentence for his execution next day. My father heard it with fortitude and piety: he demanded a respite of three days, to know what the fate of his family was to be, and to have a catholic confessor. The respite was refused. Garat assured him that there was no charge against his family, and that it would be sent out of France. The Abbé Edgeworth † de Firmont was the priest he wished for. He gave his address, and Garat brought him. The King dined as usual, which surprised the municipal officers, who expected that he would endeavour to commit suicide.

'About seven o'clock in the evening we learned the sentence by the newsmen, who came crying it under our windows: a decree of the Convention permitted us to see the King. We ran to his apartment, and found him much altered; he wept for us, and not for fear of death; he related his trial to my mother, apologizing for the wretches who had condemned him; he told her that it was proposed to attempt to save him by having recourse to the primary assemblies, but that he would not consent, lest it should excite confusion in the

* In all the course of the Revolution the king never could be persuaded to risk the shedding of blood; this was attributed to *pusillanimity*: we now see that it was a feeling compatible with the highest personal courage.

† Henry Essex Edgeworth was born at Edgeworth's-town, in Ireland, of which his father was vicar; but he resigned this preferment on account of religious scruples, and removed with his family into France, where they embraced the Roman Catholic faith. The name of Firmont was derived from Firmount, a family estate in the county of Longford. They were near relations of Mr. and Miss Edgeworth, who are so well known in the literary world.

country. He then gave my brother some religious advice, and desired him, above all, to forgive those who caused his death; and he gave him his blessing, as well as to me.

'My mother was very desirous that the whole family should pass the night with my father; but he opposed this, observing to her how much he needed some hours of repose and quiet. She asked at least to be allowed to see him next morning, to which he consented; but, when we were gone, he requested that we might not be permitted to return, as our presence afflicted him too much. He then remained with his confessor till midnight, when he went to bed.

'He slept till he was awakened by the drums at five o'clock. At six, the Abbé Edgeworth said mass and administered the holy sacrament to my father. At nine o'clock he left the Temple. On the stairs he delivered his will to a municipal officer, and a sum of money, which M. de Malesherbes had brought him, and which he desired should be returned to him; but the officers shared it amongst themselves. He met one of the turnkeys, whom he had reprimanded rather sharply the day before: he now said to him, "*Mathieu, I am sorry for having offended you.*" On his way to the scaffold he read the prayers for those at the point of death.

'On the scaffold he wished to have spoken to the people; but Santerre prevented him by ordering the drums to beat: what little he was allowed to say was heard by very few. He then undressed himself without assistance. His hands were tied, not with a rope, but with his own handkerchief. At the instant of death, his confessor exclaimed, "Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven!" *

'He received the stroke † of death on Sunday, the 21st of January, 1793, at ten minutes past ten o'clock in the forenoon.

'Thus died Louis XVI., King of France, at the age of thirty-nine years, five months, and three days, of which he had reigned eighteen. He had been five months and eight days in prison.

'Such was the life of my father during his rigorous captivity. In it were displayed piety, greatness of mind, and goodness—mildness, fortitude, and patience, in bearing the most infamous insults, the most malignant calumnies—Christian clemency, which heartily forgave even his murderers—and the love of God, his family, and his people, of which he gave the most affecting proofs, even with his last breath, and of which he went to receive the reward in the bosom of his almighty and all-merciful Creator.

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* One is sorry to have any doubt as to this sublime exclamation: but the Abbé did not recollect having made it; he could not, however, say that he had not, for he owned that he was nearly unconscious of all that passed at that dreadful crisis.—See his Memoirs, by C. S. Edgeworth, London, 1815.

† The reader will not fail to observe, that the name of the fatal instrument which deprived her parents of existence is never once mentioned by Madame.

'On the morning of this terrible day, we [the princesses] rose at six. The night before, my mother had scarcely strength enough to put my brother to bed. She threw herself, dressed as she was, upon her own bed, *where she was heard shivering with cold and grief all night long*. At a quarter past six, the door opened: we believed that they were sent for to see the King; but it was only the officers looking for a prayer-book for the King's mass. We did not, however, abandon the hope of seeing him, till the shouts of joy of the infuriated populace came to tell them that all was over!

'In the afternoon, my mother asked to see Cléry, who had remained with the King till his last moments,* and who had probably some message for her. We [the two other princesses] were anxious that she should receive this shock of seeing Cléry, in hopes of its occasioning a burst of grief, which might relieve her from that state of silent and choking agony in which they saw her.

'In fact, Cléry had been intrusted by my father to deliver to the Queen her wedding-ring,† with a message that he never would have parted with it but with his life. He had also given him a parcel containing the hair of all his family, saying, that it had been so dear to him, that he had carefully preserved it till that moment. The officers reported that Cléry was in a frightful state, and in despair, at not being allowed to see us. My mother made her request to the commissioners of the Commune; she also demanded mourning for her family. Cléry was kept for a month longer in the Temple, and then released.

'We had now a little more freedom; the guards even believed that we were about to be sent out of France; but nothing could calm the agony of the Queen. No hope could touch her heart; because life was indifferent to her, and she did not fear death. She would sometimes look upon us *with an air of pity which made them shudder*. *Fortunately* ‡ the affliction of the young princess increased her illness to so serious a degree, that it made a diversion in the mind of her mother, and her despair gave way to maternal alarm.'

We are now arrived at the *reign of Louis XVII.* His uncle, the Comte de Provence, assumed the regency of his kingdom; the

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* Cléry was not permitted to accompany the King beyond the Temple, so that this expression means *till his departure from the prison;* unless, as is probable, Madame had not, at the time she wrote this, known the exact state of the fact.

† This was, I presume, a ring given to the King by the Queen on their marriage. In the Moniteur of the 25th of January, 1793, it is described as a gold ring, with the following inscription engraved on the inside: 'M. A. A. A. 19 Aprille, 1770;" meaning, I suppose, Marie Antoinette, Archiduchesse d'Autrichie. The marriage took place the 16th of May, 1770.

‡ What a touching expression of extreme grief!

armies of Condé and of La Vendée proclaimed him by his title; and from all the principal courts of Europe, with which France was not already at war, the republican envoys were at once dismissed. In short he was King of France everywhere but in France. There he was the miserable victim of a series of personal privation and ill-usage, such as never, we suppose, were before inflicted on a child of his age, even in the humblest condition of life.

After the death of the King the family remained together in the Queen's apartment, but under equal if not increased supervision and jealousy. M. de Beauchesne has found in the records of the *Commune* a slight but striking instance of the spirit which still presided over the Temple.

'*Commune of Paris, Sitting of the 25th Jan.* 1793.

'The female citizen Laurent, calling herself the nurse of *Madame Première* [to distinguish the young Princess from *Madame* Elizabeth], has solicited the Council to be allowed to see *her child*, now confined in the Temple, and offers to stay with her until it shall be otherwise ordered. The Council General passes to the order of the day, because *it knows nobody of the name of Madame Première.*'

The only indulgence the prisoners received was, that they might put on mourning. When the Queen first saw her children in it, she said, 'My poor children, you will wear it long, but I for ever;' and she never after left her own prison-room, even to take the air for the short interval allowed them, in the garden, because she could not bear to pass the door of the apartment which had been the King's.

The royal prisoners had now no other attendants but a low man of the name of Tison, and his wife, who had been originally sent to the Temple to do the menial and rougher household work. Their conduct at first had been decent; but at length their tempers became soured by their own long confinement (for they were strictly kept close also), and especially by being suddenly interdicted from receiving the visits of their daughter, to whom they were much attached. These vexations they vented on their prisoners. Tison was moreover, as might be expected from the selection of him for the service of the Temple, a zealous Republican. He was therefore much offended at the sympathy which two of the municipals, Toulan and Lepitre, showed for the captives, and denounced these persons and another *converted* municipal of the name of Michonis

as having undue intelligence with the ladies; and though these men escaped death for the moment, they were all subsequently guillotined on these suspicions. A more rigorous set of Commissaries were now installed by Hébert, by whom the royal family were subjected to new interrogations, searches, privations, and indignities. Their condition became so miserable that even the Tisons were shocked at the mischief their denunciations had done, and both soon showed signs of repentance, especially the woman, who actually went mad from anxiety and remorse. She began by falling into a deep and restless melancholy, accusing herself of the crimes she had witnessed, and of the murders which she foresaw of the Queen, Madame Elizabeth, and the three Municipals. The derangement gradually amounted to fury, and she was after some delay removed to a madhouse. One of the strangest vicissitudes of this long tragedy was, that, while the unhappy woman remained in the Temple, the Queen and Madame Elizabeth watched over, and endeavoured by their charitable care and consolations to soothe the malady of their former persecutor.

The spirit of the new Commissaries will be sufficiently exhibited by one anecdote. The little Prince (not yet eight years old) had been accustomed to sit at table on a higher chair. One of these men, an apostate priest, Bernard* by name, who had lately been selected to conduct the King to the scaffold, saw in this incident a recognition of the royalty of the child, and took the first opportunity, when the prisoners were going to dinner, of seating himself on that very chair. Even Tison was revolted and had the courage to remonstrate with Bernard, representing that the child could not eat comfortably on a lower chair; but the fellow persisted, exclaiming aloud, 'I never before saw prisoners indulged with chairs and tables. Straw is good enough for them.' (p. 49.) And, strangest of all, after what we have seen of the state of the Temple, new walls and works were made externally, and, what more affected the prisoners, wooden-blinds (*abat-jours*) were fixed to all the windows that had them not already.

About this time (7th or 8th May) the boy fell sick, and the Queen solicited that M. Brunier, his ordinary physician, should be allowed to attend him. The Commissaries for several days not only disregarded but laughed at her request. At last the case

* He was guillotined with Robespierre.

looked more serious, and was brought before the Council of the Commune, where, after two days' debate, they came to this resolution:—

'Having considered the representation of the Commissaries on duty in the Temple, stating that little Capet is sick, Resolved that the doctor ordinarily employed in the prisons shall attend the little Capet, *seeing that it would be contrary to the principle of equality to allow him to have any other.*'

The *date* prefixed to the resolution is worthy of its contents. '10 *Mai*, 1793; 2*de de la République*, 1*er de la Mort du Tyran*.' It is, our readers will observe, bad French, and, moreover, nonsense, but its import on such an occasion is but too intelligible. The prison doctor, however, M. Thierry, acted like a man of humanity and honour. He secretly consulted M. Brunier, who was acquainted with the child's constitution, and, for the three weeks that his attendance lasted, the Queen and Madame Elizabeth, who never quitted the child's pillow, had every reason to be satisfied with M. Thierry.

This illness, though so serious that Madame Royale thought her brother had *never* recovered from it, made no noise; for all other interests were at the moment stifled in the great struggle between the Jacobins and the Girondins, which ended, on the celebrated 31st of May, in the overthrow of the latter. Hitherto the general Government—that is, the Convention—busy with its internal conflicts—had, as far as we are informed, left the Temple to the discretion of the Commune—but it now (9th July) intervened directly, and a decree of the Committee of Public Safety directed the separation of 'the son of Capet' from his mother and his transfer to the hands of a tutor (*instituteur*), to be chosen still by the municipals (ii. p. 67). It was 10 o'clock at night—the sick child was asleep in a bed without curtains, to which he had hitherto been accustomed—but his mother had hung a shawl over it, to keep from his eyes the light by which she and Madame Elizabeth were sitting up later than usual mending their clothes. The doors suddenly opened with a loud crash of the locks and bolts, and six Commissaries entered—one of them abruptly and brutally announcing the decree of separation. Of the long scene that ensued we can only give a summary. The Queen was thrown into an agony of surprise, terror, and grief. She urged all that maternal tender-

ness could suggest, and even descended to the humblest prayers and supplications against the execution of such an unnatural decree. The child awoke in the utmost alarm, and when they attempted to take him clung to his mother—the mother clung with him to the posts of the bed—violence was attempted, but she held on :—

'At last one of the Commissaries said, "It does not become us to fight with women—call up the guard." Madame Elizabeth exclaimed —"No, for God's sake, no; we submit—we cannot resist—but at least give us time to breathe—let the child sleep here the rest of the night. He will be delivered to you to-morrow." No answer. The Queen then prayed that he might at least remain in the Tower, where she might still see him. One of the Commissaries answered in the most brutal manner and *tutoyant* the Queen—"We have no account to give you, and it is not for you to question the intentions of the nation. What? you make such a to-do, because, forsooth, you are separated from your child, while our children are sent to the frontiers to have their brains knocked out by the bullets which you bring upon us." The ladies now began to dress the boy—but never was a child so long a-dressing—every article was successively passed from one hand to another—put on and taken off, replaced, and drenched with tears. They thus delayed the separation by a few minutes. The Commissaries began to lose patience. At last the Queen, gathering up all her strength, placed herself in a chair with the child standing before her—put her hands on his little shoulders, and, without a tear or a sigh, said, with a grave and solemn voice—"My child, we are about to part. Bear in mind all I have said to you of your duties when I shall be no longer near you to repeat it. Never forget God who thus tries you, nor your mother who loves you. Be good, patient, kind, and your father will look down from heaven and bless you." Having said this she kissed him and handed him to the Commissaries: one of whom said—"Come, I hope you have done with your sermonising—you have abused our patience finely." "You might have spared your lesson," said another, who dragged the boy out of the room. A third added—"Don't be uneasy—the nation, always great and generous, will take care of his education:"—and the door closed!'

That same night the young King was handed over to the tutelage and guardianship of the notorious Simon and his wife, of whose obscure history M. de Beauchesne has not disdained to unravel the details. He has traced out some octogenarians of their own—that is, the lowest—class, who knew them, and from these and other sources he has collected a series of circumstances

ignoble in themselves, but curious in their moral and political import. The traditionary details related at an interval of fifty years by the gossips of Madame Simon would not obtain much credit, but the substance of the sad story is confirmed by abundant evidence. Anthony Simon, of the age (in 1794) of 58, was above the middle size—stout built—of a very forbidding countenance, dark complexion, and a profusion of hair and whiskers—by trade a shoemaker, working in his own lodgings, which were accidentally next door to Marat in the *Rue des Cordeliers*, afterwards *de l'Ecole de Médecine*, and close to the Club of the Cordeliers—of which he was an assiduous attendant. This neighbourhood impregnated him with an outrageous degree of *civism*, and procured his election into the *Commune*, whence he was delegated to be Commissary in the Temple. There the patronage of Marat, his own zeal in harassing the prisoners, and especially his activity in seconding the denunciations of the Tisons, procured him the office of Tutor to the young King. His wife, Mary-Jane Aladame, was about the same age—very short, very thick, and very ill-favoured. She had been but a few years married, and too late in life to have children, which exasperated her natural ill temper. Both were illiterate, and in manners what might be expected in such people. Their pay for the guardianship of the young Capet was, says the decree of the Commune, to be the same as that of the Tisons for their attendance on Capet senior, 500 francs (20*l.*) a month. This was significant—the *tutor* of the young King was to have the same wages as the household drudges of the whole family. They were moreover subjected to the hard conditions—Simon, of *never* losing sight of his prisoner—and both, of never quitting the Tower for a moment on any pretext whatsoever without special permission, which was only and rarely granted to the wife. It was in such occasional visits to her own lodgings that she had those communications with her neighbours as to what passed in the interior of the Temple, to which M. de Beauchesne attaches more importance than we think they deserve. We applaud his zeal for tracing out and producing *valeat quantum* every gleam of evidence on so dark a subject; but we should have little confidence in this class of details. We know, however, from Madame Royale's short notes, enough of the characters of the Simons and of the system of mental and bodily torture to which the poor child was exposed, to believe that his common appellations were '*animal*,'—'*viper*,'—

'*toad*,'—'*wolf-cub*,' garnished with still more brutal epithets, and sometimes accompanied by corporal punishment.

At half-past 10 on the night we have just described, the young King and his astonishing tutor were installed in the apartment on the third story of the Tower, which had been his father's, but which was now, strange to say, additionally, strengthened and rendered still more gloomy and incommodious for the custody of the son. For the two first days he wept incessantly, would eat nothing but some dry bread—refused to go to bed, and never spoke but to call for his 'mother.' He could not comprehend his position, nor why he was so treated, but on the third day hunger and the threats of Simon reduced him to a kind of silent submission, which however did not mitigate the vexations with which the tutor soon began to discipline him into what he called *equality*, and which the poor child found to mean nothing but the most degrading servitude to his task-master. Even things that might look like indulgences were poisoned by the malice with which they were accompanied: for instance, Simon gave him one of those vulgar musical toys that the little Savoyards and boys in the street were used to play, called *Jew's-harps*, with the gracious speech, 'Your wolf of a mother and your b—— of an aunt play on the harpsicord—you must learn to accompany them on this, and it will be a fine racket.' The child resented the indignity and threw away the Jew's-harp. This was rebellion against a constituted authority, and he was punished even with blows—blows, although it is proved by the apothecary's bills in the archives of the Commune, that during the whole of June and July he was so ill as to be under medical treatment. But even this did not yet subdue him, and he continued, with a courage and intelligence above his age—which only produced new violence—to insist on being restored to his 'mother.' A few days after there was a commotion in Paris, on the pretence of one of those conspiracies which were so constantly invented when the dominant party had some purpose to answer. The present object was to throw more odium on the unfortunate Girondins; but the prisoners of the Temple as usual came in for their share. Four members of the Committee of *Sûreté Générale* visited the Temple of whom Drouet, the postmaster of Ste. Menehoud, and Chabot, an apostate monk, were the chief: they held a long and secret conference with Simon, which concluded in the following dialogue:—'*Citizens*,' asked the Guardian,

'*What do you decide as to the treatment of the wolf-cub (louveteau)? He has been brought up to be insolent—I can tame him to be sure, but I cannot answer that he will not sink (crever) under it—so much the worse for him—but after all what do you mean to do with him?—to banish him?*—Answer, *No! To kill him?—No! To poison him!*—No! *But what then?*—To get rid of him! (*S'en defaire*).'*

This wonderful dialogue is vouched by the revelation of one Senart, who himself was secretary to the Committee, and, after the fall of Robespierre, imprisoned as a terrorist. Senart had added on his MS. as a marginal note—'*He was not killed—nor banished—but they got rid of him.*' The process was, as we shall soon see, even more horrible than the design.

From the son the Committee went down to the mother:—

'They began by such an examination of the persons and the apartment as thief-takers would make of a den of thieves—at last Drouet [note the choice of *Drouet* as the spokesman to the Queen] said, "We are come to see whether you want anything." "*I want my child,*" said the Queen. "Your son is taken care of," replied Drouet; "he has a patriot *preceptor*, and you have no more reason to complain of his treatment than of your own." "I complain of nothing, Sir, but the absence of my child, from whom I have never before been separated; he has been now five days taken from me, and all I am allowed to know about him is that he is ill and in special want of my care. I cannot believe that the Convention would not acknowledge the justice of my complaint."'.

Drouet, in a hypocritical report to the Convention of this mission, stated that the prisoners admitted that they were in want of nothing, and totally suppressed the complaint of the Queen.

Henceforward the severity of Simon grew more savage, and every untoward event from without, especially the assassination of his friend and patron Marat, increased his fury. He forced the boy to wait on him, to clean his shoes, and to perform the most humiliating offices. On one point only the young king's resistance was inflexible—he would not wear the *red cap;* for he probably remembered his having been forced to assume it during the ter-

* The Memoirs published, in 1824, in the name of Senart (who died in 1797) have no allusion to this matter; but they are manifestly, and, indeed, confessedly, garbled by the original editor. M. Turgy, who saw the MS., has given these extracts that M. de Beauchesne repeats. Senart was a great scoundrel; and though he may sometimes tell truth, we look upon him as very doubtful authority—indeed of none, except when, as in this case, his evidence may tell against himself.

rible riots of the 20th of June the year before. In vain Simon scolded, threatened, and at last again flogged him—nothing would subdue him into wearing the odious cap. At last the woman's heart of Madame Simon melted, and she persuaded her husband to give over the contest—she could not bear to see the child beaten, but she was willing enough that he should be bullied and degraded. His light hair curling in long ringlets had been a peculiar delight of his mother—they must be removed—Madame Simon cut them close all round. This very much disconcerted him—it tamed him more than blows could do, and by and by, under the fresh inflictions of Simon, he was brought to endure the red cap with the rest of the Carmagnole costume. It had a piteous effect upon which even Simon's cruelty had not calculated. To prevent the ladies seeing the boy, even when taking the air on the leads, a partition of boards had been erected; but the two princesses had discovered a chink in the carpentry through which they might possibly get a peep of him as he passed. When the Queen heard of this chance she overcame her repugnance to leave her room, and employed every device to be near the partition at the times when her son might be expected to pass, and for hours and days she watched at the chink. At last, on Tuesday the 30th of July (the exact date of so great an event in their life of monotonous sorrow was noted), she caught a sight of her beloved boy, but what she had so long desired was but a new affliction—he was not in mourning for his father—he had on the Carmagnole jacket and red cap, the livery of the Revolution, and it happened still more unfortunately that, at that moment, Simon was out of humour, and the Queen was near enough to see and hear, though indistinctly, his rude treatment and detestable language. She was thunderstruck, and retired hastily, and almost fainting with horror, intending never to subject herself to such another shock; but maternal tenderness was stronger than indignation, and she returned to the partition on that and the two or three succeeding days to watch for a passing glimpse. Her grief was now fearfully increased by learning, though very vaguely, through Tison, who had returned to a softer mood, that the child's health was not improved, and that his mind was exposed to the worst influences of his atrocious tutor.

This crisis, however, of her diversified agony lasted but a few days. In the middle of the night between the 1st and 2nd of

August the Commissioners entered the apartment of the royal ladies to announce a decree of the Convention for transferring the Queen to the *Conciergerie*—the notorious antechamber to the scaffold. The Queen well knew she was going to death—she left her son in the hands of Simon—she knew she should never again see her daughter; she has one lingering consolation—she leaves *her* in the care of Madame Elizabeth, and cannot imagine that this innocent, inoffensive, and saint-like woman could be in any danger. Even in that hope she was deceived—though, happily for her, she died in it.

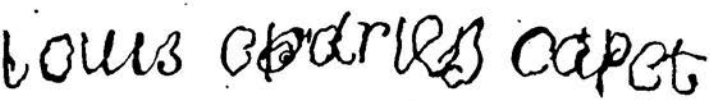
The same day that the Queen was sent to the Conciergerie, Chaumette—the organ of the Commune—directed his kind recollection to the royal boy, and sent him a present of toys, amongst which the most remarkable was—a little *guillotine*. Such toys the police allowed to be sold in the streets of Paris, and the toymen had a stock of sparrows, with whose decapitation they amused their customers. This well-timed *souvenir* of his father's fate was probably intended by Chaumette to apprise the boy of the lot intended for his mother; it happened however that day that the Commissioners on duty at the Temple did not participate in Chaumette's benevolent intentions, and one of them was so perverse as to intercept and destroy the amiable plaything before it reached the child. It is a curious sequel to this anecdote that Chaumette was, we believe, the very first of the Members of the Council of the Commune who had practical experience of the real machine of which he so much admired the model—he was guillotined on the 13th of April following—a month before Madame Elizabeth, and more than a year before the death of the child whom he had hoped to terrify by his ill-omened present!

In the mean while the demoralization of the child was zealously pursued by the Simons—he was forced to drink, taught to swear, and sing patriotic, that is, indecent and blasphemous songs, not merely with the ultimate object of '*getting rid of him*,' but for a purpose nearer at hand and still more atrocious. The Queen's trial approached, and Hébert and Chaumette had conceived the infernal idea of obtaining from the child evidence against his mother so monstrous that our pen refuses to repeat it. After obtaining—by what terror or violence who can tell?—the signature of the child to a deposition drawn up by one Daujon under Hébert's dictation, they had the, if possible, still greater infamy of questioning Madame

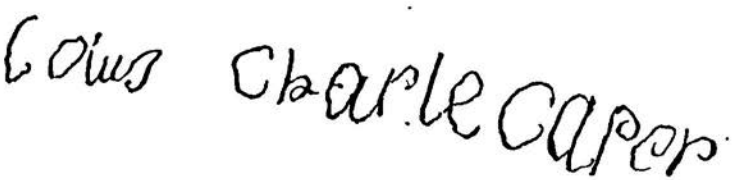
Royale on the same horror, which they repeated to Madame Elizabeth. We copy the younger Madame's own account of this extraordinary inquisition:—

'They questioned me about a thousand terrible things of which they accused my mother and aunt. I was so shocked at hearing such horrors, and so indignant, that, frightened as I was, I could not help exclaiming that they were infamous falsehoods; but, in spite of my tears, they still pressed their questions. There were things which I did not comprehend, but of which I understood enough to make me weep with indignation and horror. My aunt's examination lasted but one hour, while mine lasted three; because the deputies saw they had no chance of intimidating her as they had hoped to be able to do so young a person by the length and grossness of their inquiries. They were however mistaken: they forgot that the life I had led for four years past, and, above all, the example shown me by my parents, had given me more energy and strength of mind.'—*Royal Mem.*, p. 248.

Although the three victims were examined separately, yet the boy was made to sign each of the three depositions. M. de Beauchesne has been lucky enough to find the original documents, and he has given us *facsimiles* of the signatures. We think it worth while to reproduce those of the child, which seem to us melancholy evidence both of the force exercised over him—of the retrocession of his education, for he wrote better two years before—and of his utter incapability (apart from all higher considerations) of understanding what he was about. The first is the signature to his own deposition, the body of which was prepared by Daujon; indeed M. de Beauchesne says that the fellow boasted of having invented every word of it:—



The second to that of his sister:—



The third to that of his aunt:—

The fourth was to a supplementary deposition against his aunt, which we shall mention presently:—

We leave this series of signatures to the appreciation of our readers; they will not fail to observe that the name *Capet*, which the child had probably never heard before his imprisonment, and which in two out of four attempts he could not spell, are decisive evidence that the signatures were not spontaneous; and even if they had been real signatures, it is but justice to the memory of the poor child, the victim of all these atrocities, to repeat that he was at the time just eight years and six months old, and had been more than a year in prison, and above three months in the close custody and under the brutalising discipline of Simon. M. de Beauchesne states that the depositions were not even read over to him. We know not where he has found that statement, but it is certain that the child was incapable of understanding them. The best commentary, indeed, on these documents, is that of the poor Queen herself, who says in her testamentary letter to Madame Elizabeth—also accused in these horrible depositions:—

'I have now to speak to you on a subject most painful to my heart. I know how much that poor boy must have distressed you. Forgive him, my dear sister, recollect how young he is, and how easy it is to put what one pleases into a child's mouth, even what he cannot comprehend. The day will come, I hope, when he will feel all your goodness and tenderness to him and his sister.'

It was under these auspices and influences that the Queen's trial commenced on the 14th October, and lasted two whole days and nights, without intermission. She bore that protracted agony with unparalleled patience, presence of mind, and dignity. Nothing in the slightest degree confirmatory of the political charges against her

was or could be produced. But then at length Hébert brought forward his calumny, equally horrible and superfluous, for the fatal result was already prepared. She disdained to notice it, till one of the jury—not what we in England understand by a *jury*, but the permanent gang of judicial assassins, packed and paid to deal with all cases that should be presented to them, according to the dictates of the public accuser—one of the jury, we say, observed to her that she had not replied to *that* point. On this challenge, she elevated with supreme dignity her head and her voice, and, turning from the Court to the audience, uttered these admirable words:—'*I did not answer, because nature refuses to answer such a charge; but I appeal against it to the heart of every mother who hears me.*'

And subsequently, when the counsel who had been assigned to her terminated their short and interrupted defence, the President asked her whether she had anything to add. She said:—

'For myself, nothing—for your consciences, much! I was a Queen, and you dethroned me—I was a wife, and you murdered my husband—I was a mother, and you have torn my children from me—I have nothing left but my blood—make haste to take it.'

M. de Beauchesne does not give us his authority for the allocution, which we do not remember to have seen elsewhere; if really made, this last was the only request ever granted her. The trial was concluded at an early hour on the third morning, and at *eleven* o'clock on that same forenoon she was led to the scaffold.

We cannot refrain from marking the fearful *retribution* which followed these infamous proceedings. Within *nine months* from the death of the Queen, the accusers, the judges, the jury, the prosecutors, the witnesses, ALL—at least all whose fate is known—perished by the same instrument as the illustrious and innocent victim.

The prisoners of the Temple knew nothing of the Queen's trial and death. The two princesses were in close confinement, and had no attendant whatever. They did not even see their gaolers. Tison himself was now a prisoner. They were, in fact, alone in the world. They made their own beds, swept their room, and learned to suffice for all their menial offices. Their food was delivered to them through the half-opened door, and they saw nothing but the *hands* that brought it. They were sometimes visited, searched, insulted, by the members of the Commune—else they

never saw a human face. It was eighteen months before Madame Royale heard of her mother's fate. Nor did she know that of either her aunt or her brother till near her own final deliverance, though one of them had died in the face of all Paris, and the latter in the next room to her own.

About ten days after the Queen's death, 26th October, the boy made another declaration:—

'That one day while Simon was on duty at the Temple [in his former character of Commissary] in company with *Jobert*, Jobert had conveyed two notes to the Queen without Simon's having seen them, and that this trick [espièglerie] made those *ladies* (*ces dames*) laugh very much at having deceived the vigilance of Simon. He deponent did not see the paper, but only that those *ladies* had told him so.

'Before signing, he, little Capet, said, that his mother was afraid of his aunt, and that his aunt was the best manager of plots (*exécutait mieux les complots*).'

This is the deposition to which the last of the preceding signatures was affixed, and, insignificant as it may seem, it is pregnant with curious circumstances, which deserve some development, and particularly as they have escaped the notice of M. de Beauchesne. Simon, when he first reported this statement to the Commune, declined to mention the name of the colleague accused of bringing the notes, and he requested them to nominate some of their own body to take the boy's deposition from his own mouth,—it was then that *Jobert* was mentioned. M. de Beauchesne makes no observation on the name—but, according to other evidence, it was a strange one to find in these circumstances—for Jobert (unless there were *two* commissaries of the *same* name), so far from being likely to be an accomplice of the royal ladies, was of Simon's own *clique;* and remained, even after this affair, in such full confidence with his party, that he, like Simon himself, *followed Robespierre to the scaffold* in the days of Thermidor. The story, therefore, of the notes, if true at all, was probably a device of Jobert and his employers to *entrap* the royal ladies into some difficulty—though why Simon should have brought it up again seems hardly explicable, unless, indeed, it was intended as a prelude to the subsequent proceedings against Madame Elizabeth. However this may be, it is evident that, even if the fact, as stated by the child, was true, the *rédaction*—the form and phraseology of the deposition—could not have been his, nor could it have been altogether Simon's, for *he*

certainly would not have used and repeated the semi-respectful term of '*ces dames*' for the Princesses; it may therefore be safely concluded that the *rédaction* was, to some extent at least, that of the magistrate delegated by the Commune to conduct the inquiry; and it seems, by another of those wonderful vicissitudes with which the Revolution abounded, that it was the poor magistrate who fell a sacrifice to the charge directed against *Jobert*. This magistrate (we find from the *procès verbal*) was George Fallope—aged 64—an eminent apothecary in the Rue St. Honoré, who, though reputed a zealous *patriot*, and as such elected into the Commune, was an educated and, it is said, a respectable man; and it is most probable that the insignificance of the deposition itself as regarded the Princesses, the revelation of the name of the patriot Jobert, and the use of the term '*ces dames*,' may have been attributed by his disappointed and angry colleagues to his integrity and decency. Certain it is that the next—and most unexpected—mention we find of the poor old apothecary is, as suffering on the same scaffold with his '*accomplice*' Madame Elizabeth!—(*Liste des Condamnés*, No. 916, 10th May, 1794.)

Another deposition, especially directed against Madame Elizabeth, was soon after extorted from the child—equally ignorant, no doubt, of the consequences of the words put into his mouth as in the former case. Indeed the imagination of such a charge as it was brought forward to support is so grossly absurd, that it is only astonishing it could have been thought of even in that reign of insanity. The Princesses were lodged on the third floor of the great Tower, the boy in the second: all the stories were vaulted; there was no communication between the apartments, nor even between the persons employed in the service of either; and under these circumstances he was made, by a deposition dated the 3rd December, 1793, to tell this story, which we give in the exact terms which he is supposed to have used:—

'That for the last fortnight or three weeks he had heard the prisoners [his aunt and sister] knocking every consecutive day between the hours of six and nine; that since the day before yesterday, this noise happened a little later and lasted longer than the preceding days; that this noise seemed to come from that part of their room where the fire-wood was kept—that moreover he knows (*connaît*), from the sound of their footsteps (which he distinguishes from the other noise), that during this time the prisoners leave the place

where (as he has indicated) the wood is kept, and move into the embrasure of the window of their sleeping-room, which makes him presume that they hide away something in these embrasures: he thinks it may be *forged assignats* [!!!], but is not sure, and that they might pass them through the window to somebody.'

He *knows* the noise was made by the prisoners, and not by any one else; he can *distinguish* through the solid vaultings of the old fortress of the Templars the footsteps of two young women from the noise that would be made in the fabrication of assignats, a thing and a process of which he probably had never heard; if the steps are directed towards their bedroom, it must be to hide something—he thinks *forged assignats!* he thinks, too, they might convey them through the barricaded and blockaded window, some fifty or sixty feet from the ground, to *somebody*—the only *bodies* in the whole wide space around the tower being their gaolers and sentinels; and all this the spontaneous observations and declarations of a child 8 years and 6 months old. Such a tissue of nonsense was never, we suppose, before put together; it was even too much for Simon, who excused himself for not detecting the noise by alleging that he was '*a little hard of hearing;*' but his wife was sharper—she heard it all—but *she* never mentioned it, though Simon states that 'for about eight days the said Charles Capet had been in a torment (*se tourmentait*) to make this declaration to the members of the Council.'

We may here, and without further observation, leave to the wonder and indignation of our readers these abominable depositions, still extant in the national archives, and quite as characteristic of the Republic, though in so different a style, as even the Massacres and the Guillotine.

Meanwhile the brutalities inflicted on the poor child continued with even greater rigour. One or two instances must suffice. Strictly shut up in one dark room, with no distraction or amusement whatsoever, he had become so pitiable a picture of lassitude and despondency, that one of the persons employed about the Tower obtained Simon's consent to his having an artificial canary-bird which was in the Garde Meuble, and which, by an ingenious mechanism, fluttered its wings and sang a tune. This so much pleased him, that the same good-natured suggestion was made as to some real canaries, tamed and taught as these little creatures sometimes are. Still more gratified, he made an affectionate

acquaintance with his three feathered friends. But this was too aristocratical an indulgence. One of the Commissaries in particular took offence at it—the machine and the living favourites were all sent away, and the weeping boy was left again in solitude, or, still worse, the company of his morose guardians, who rarely spoke to him, and never but with harshness and insult.

Another instance is more seriously revolting. In the midst of his degradation he had some memory, or perhaps *dreamed*, of his former feelings and habits. Simon detected him one night kneeling in his bed with his hands joined, and appearing to say his prayers. The impious wretch did not know whether the child was asleep or awake, but the superstitious attitude threw him into an extraordinary fury; he seized a great pitcher of water—icy cold—the night was the 14th or 15th of January—and flung it over him, exclaiming, 'I'll teach you to say your *Paternosters* and to get up in the night like a *Trappist*.'* Nor was that all; he struck him on the face with his iron-heeled shoe, the implement of punishment he had nearest at hand, and was only prevented beating him still more severely by the interposition of his wife. The child, shivering and sobbing, endeavoured to escape from the soaking mattress by sitting on the pillow, but Simon dragged him down and stretched him on the bed swimming with water, and, covering him with the wet clothes, forced him to lie in this state till morning. The shock and suffering which the child endured that night seemed to have a permanent and enfeebling influence both on his mind and body; it entirely broke his spirit, and confirmed, if it did not produce, the lingering malady of which he died.

But the authors of his misery were hardly less miserable than he. They were equally prisoners, condemned to the same seclusion from all society, and their only consolation was visiting their own annoyances on the descendant of so many kings. But even of this they were gradually growing weary, when a fresh circumstance, that affected the *amour propre* of both husband and wife, completed their disgust. A decree of the Commune directed that the woman should not make her occasional visits to her own lodgings, nor the husband go into even the court-yard or garden of the prison, unattended by municipal officers. When he asked once

* The monks of *La Trappe* were celebrated for their ascetic devotions.

to go home for some private purpose, he was told he could only do so accompanied by two of these functionaries. This shocked his dignity: his neighbours thought him the guardian of the young king and a great man; he could not bear to appear amongst them as a prisoner. When he once was summoned to give evidence before the Revolutionary Tribunal he was escorted by a couple of municipals. When he solicited permission to attend, with his colleagues of the Commune, a national *fête* in honour of the retaking Toulon, he was harshly refused, and told that in the Temple he was at his proper post. At last he had an opportunity of escaping from his intolerable thraldom. A 'self-denying ordinance' of the Commune decided that no person receiving a public salary could remain a member of that body. Simon gladly availed himself of the option, resigned his office in the Temple, and resumed his functions in the Commune, only to die six months later, with sixty or seventy of his colleagues and co-partners in crime, on the '*échafaud vengeur*' of Thermidor.

On the 19th January, 1794, the Simons took their departure. The wife said, with a tone of kindness, 'Capet, I know not when I may see you again.' Simon interrupted her with a malediction on the '*toad*.' But was the child's condition improved? Alas, no! His active persecutors were gone, but he was left to privations worse than inflictions—to cold—darkness—solitary confinement—a regimen which even the strongest bodies and the most determined spirits have been found unable to endure.

The Committees of Government decided that Simon, as he could have no equal, should have no successor. Chaumet and Hébert, still the ruling authorities of the Temple, accepted this decision, and said they would endeavour to obtain from the *force of things* (*la force des choses*) that security which the absence of a personal superintendence denied them. This *force of things* was thus expounded: he was confined to a single room (where Cléry had slept during the King's life); it had one window, closely barred and blinded by an *abat-jour*, which admitted only a small degree of oblique light, and was never opened for air; the door was removed and replaced by a half-door below, and by iron bars above; a portion of those iron bars, when unlocked, opened like a trap, through which he received his food and passed out whatever he had to send away; the room had no other means of being heated than a pipe which was led through a part of it from a stove

in another apartment, the lighting of the fire in which was capricious and precarious. At night the only light was a lamp hung on the wall of the ante-room opposite to the iron grating of the door. Whether by accident, or as a kind of triumph, it was on the 21st of January, the anniversary of his father's death, that the young king was transferred to this dungeon—a prelude to his own. The horrors of such a condition—aggravated by the weakness of the child, who could do nothing to alleviate his wants—are obscured rather than illustrated by M. de Beauchesne's inflated and figurative eloquence. When the boy, on being shut up for the first time in this solitary duress, made no complaint and showed no change of temper, M. de Beauchesne imagines that

'he may have felt himself beyond the reach of men—free in his prison—*like a young fawn that had escaped to the hollow of some secluded valley from the pursuit of the hounds and hunters.*'

In preference to such a style of narrative, our readers will thank us for substituting the simple and much more impressive sketch of *Madame Royale*, which, indeed, contains in substance all that M. de Beauchesne has so needlessly amplified, and all that we really know of this interval:—

'Unheard-of and unexampled barbarity! to leave an unhappy and sickly infant, of eight years old, in a great room, locked and bolted in, with no other resource than a broken bell, which he never rang, so greatly did he dread the people whom its sound would have brought to him; he preferred wanting anything, and everything, to calling for his persecutors. His bed had not been stirred for six months, and he had not strength to make it himself—it was alive with bugs, and vermin still more disgusting. His linen and his person were covered with them. For more than a year he had had no change of shirt or stockings; every kind of filth was allowed to accumulate about him, and in his room; and, during all that period, nothing of that kind had been removed. His window, which was locked as well as grated, was never opened; and the infectious smell of this horrid room was so dreadful, that no one could bear it for a moment. He might, indeed, have washed himself, for he had a pitcher of water, and have kept himself somewhat more clean than he did; but, overwhelmed by the ill treatment he had received, he had not resolution to do so, and his illness began to deprive him of even the necessary strength. He never asked for anything, so great was his dread of Simon and his other keepers. He passed his days without any kind of occupation. They did not even allow

him light in the evening. This situation affected his mind as well as his body, and it is not surprising that he should have fallen into a frightful atrophy. The length of time which he resisted this persecution proves how good his constitution must have originally been.'—*Royal Mem.*, p. 256.

But while death was thus slowly and silently advancing on the young king, the insatiable Guillotine was rapidly sweeping away hundreds of guilty and thousands of innocent victims. Indeed we might call them all innocent, for there was not, we believe, a single one of them—no, not even Danton or Hébert—who, however culpable, or even execrable, in other respects, had committed any of the pretended offences for which they suffered. Nay, we are convinced that, of the 2637 executed by the Revolutionary Tribunal in Paris up to the fall of Robespierre, it would be difficult to find half a dozen who were fairly convicted or really guilty of the fact for which they were condemned. Injustice was proved to be blinder than justice is proverbially supposed to be.

But, of all who suffered in that promiscuous massacre, the most transcendently innocent was the Princess Elizabeth. We have never been able to discover any pretext, nor to conjecture any motive, for her death. The least irrational suspicion that we have been able to arrive at is that Robespierre had really formed some scheme of personal ambition upon the young princess, to which it was hoped to intimidate and subjugate her by the loss of her aunt. This is, no doubt, an almost incredible project, but it is hardly stranger than Robespierre's contemporaneous proceedings, and it derives a kind of colour (as M. de Beauchesne remarks) from the mysterious visit which Robespierre made to the Temple, on which occasion he saw Madame Royale (*Royal Mem.*, p. 266); and it seems rendered somewhat less improbable by the slight, but not perhaps insignificant, fact, that in the *original* edition of Madame Royale's narrative the mention of that visit was suppressed, probably from a dislike to preserve any trace of an insolence against which all the best feelings of her nature must have revolted.

But, whatever may have been the motive, Madame Elizabeth was executed on the 10th of May. She died as she had lived, like a saint. In the room where they were assembled in the prison on the morning of their execution she exhorted all her fellow-sufferers—

'with a presence of mind, an elevation of soul, and a religious enthu-

siasm, that fortified all their minds. In the cart she preserved the same firmness, and encouraged and supported the women who accompanied her.* At the scaffold they had the barbarity to execute her the last [though she stood *first* on the list of 25]. All the women, as they left they cart, asked leave to embrace her. She kissed them all, and, with her usual composure, said some words of comfort to each. Her strength did not fail her to the last, and she died with all the resignation of the purest piety.'—*Royal Mem.*

Madame Royale did not for a long time know the fate of her aunt; when she asked after her she received evasive answers—'she was gone elsewhere for change of air;' when she entreated, since she was deprived of her aunt, that she might be restored to her mother, she was told 'they would consider it.'

Of the visit of Robespierre just mentioned, Madame Royale's account (in the later editions) is, as might be expected, short and dry—a just expression of what her pride and her piety would suffer in such an interview:—

'One day there came a man who I believe was Robespierre. The officers showed him great respect. His visit was a secret even to the people in the Tower, who did not know who he was; or, at least, would not tell me: he stared insolently at me, cast his eyes on my books, and, after joining the municipal officers in a search, retired.' —*Ib.*

M. de Beauchesne gives the exact and important *date*, and adds a remarkable circumstance:—

'*The day after the execution of Madame Elizabeth*—that is, 11th May —Madame Royale was visited by Robespierre. She did not speak one word to him. She only gave him a paper, in which she had written—"*My brother is ill. I have written to the Convention to be allowed to go to take care of him. The Convention has not yet answered me. I repeat my demand.*"'—ii. 219.

This is all very probable; and the cold and dignified style of the note is such as we may believe Madame would have used: but

* There were executed at the same time Madame de Senozan, the venerable sister of M. de Malesherbes, aged seventy-six, and Mesdames de Crussol, de l'Aigle, de Montmorin, de Canizy, de Cercy, and de Serilly, and an old Mdlle. de Buard. Among the men were four gentlemen of the Lomenie family, and George Fallope, the apothecary.

M. de Beauchesne does not cite his authority either for the date or the note, which surely, considering the silence of Madame Royale herself, he was bound to do.

Both the royal children were now in separate and solitary confinement: and here again we prefer the simple narrative of the elder sufferer to the amplifications of M. de Beauchesne:—

'The guards were often drunk; but they generally left my brother and me quiet in our respective apartments until the 9th Thermidor. My brother still pined in solitude and filth. His keepers never went near him but to give him his meals; they had no compassion for this unhappy child. There was one of the guards whose gentle manners encouraged me to recommend my brother to his attention; this man ventured to complain of the severity with which the boy was treated, but he was dismissed next day. For myself I asked nothing but what was indispensable, and even this was often harshly refused; but I, at least, could keep myself clean. I had soap and water, and carefully swept out my room every day. I had no light; but in the long days [from May to August] I did not feel much this privation. They would not give me any more books; but I had some religious works and some travels, which I had read over and over.'—*Roy. Mem.*

The fall of Robespierre (28th July, 1794), which opened the prison doors of so many other innocent victims, did not liberate the two children in the Temple, though it alleviated in some respects their personal sufferings. On the 10th Thermidor, Barras, who had played a chief part in the success of the preceding day as commander-in-chief of the troops employed against Robespierre, visited the Temple, and the result of his inspection was the appointment of a single guardian in lieu of the Commissaries of the Commune (most of whom, indeed, were that day and the next sent to the scaffold), and to this office he named one Laurent, a private acquaintance of his own. Laurent was a *Creole*, a native of St. Domingo.* How he first obtained the confidence of Barras is not stated; he was, indeed, noted in his district for his *patriotism*, but this was at the moment no great nor even very favourable distinction. Laurent, by whatever interest appointed, did not disgrace his patrons. M. de Beauchesne tells

* Could it have arisen from the influence of *Josephine Beauharnais*, herself a *Creole*, already intimate with both Tallien and Barras, the heroes of the day, and always ready to do a good-natured act?

us he was a man of some degree of education, good manners, and humanity, and the very first circumstances of his introduction struck him with astonishment. He arrived at the Temple on the evening of his appointment; he was received by some municipals who were still in authority; they closely scrutinised his appointment, and detained him so long, that it was not till two o'clock in the morning that he was conducted to the room of the 'little Capet.' They had explained in general terms the way in which the child was treated, but it was far from giving him any idea of the reality. When he entered the anteroom he was met by a sickening smell which escaped through the grated door of the inner room. One of the municipals, approaching the grating, called in a loud voice, 'Capet! Capet!' Capet did not answer. After much calling, a faint sound announced that it was heard, but no movement followed, and neither calls nor even threats could induce the victim to get up and show himself; and it was only by the light of a candle held inside the bars, and which fell on the bed in the opposite corner, that Laurent saw the body that was thus delivered to his charge. With this he contented himself that night, for it seems that neither he nor the municipals had either the authority or the mechanical means to open that door. Another visit next morning had the same results; the child would neither speak nor show himself, though Laurent had addressed him in terms of kindness and persuasion. Alarmed and shocked at this state of things, Laurent made a peremptory appeal to the government for an immediate examination into the condition of the child. The request was granted, and accordingly next day, the 31st of July, several members of the Committee *de Sûreté Générale* came to conduct it:—

'They called to him through the grating—no answer. They then ordered the door to be opened: it seems there were no means of doing it. A workman was called, who forced away the bars of the trap so as to get in his head, and, having thus got sight of the child, asked him why he did not answer? Still no reply. In a few minutes the whole door was broken down (*enlevée*), and the visitors entered. Then appeared a spectacle more horrible than can be conceived—a spectacle which never again can be seen in the annals of a nation calling itself civilized, and which even the murderers of Louis XVI. could not witness without mingled pity and fright. In a dark room, exhaling a smell of death and corruption, on a crazy

and dirty bed, a child of nine years old was lying prostrate, motionless, and bent up, his face livid and furrowed by want and suffering, and his limbs half covered with a filthy cloth and trowsers in rags. His features, once so delicate, and his countenance, once so lively, denoted now the gloomiest apathy—almost insensibility; and his blue eyes, looking larger from the meagreness of the rest of his face, had lost all spirit, and taken, in their dull immovability, a tinge of grey and green. His head and neck were eaten up (*rongés*) with purulent sores; his legs, arms, and neck, thin and angular, were unnaturally lengthened at the expense of his chest and body. His hands and feet were not human. A thick paste of dirt stuck like pitch over his temples; and his once beautiful curls were full of vermin, which also covered his whole body, and which, as well as bugs, swarmed in every fold of the rotten bedding, over which black spiders were running. . . . At the noise of forcing the door the child gave a nervous shudder, but barely moved, hardly noticing the strangers. A hundred questions were addressed to him; he answered none of them: he cast a vague, wandering, and unmeaning look at his visitors, and at this moment one would have taken him for an idiot. The food they had given him was still untouched; one of the commissioners asked him why he had not eaten it? Still no answer. At last, the oldest of the visitors, whose grey hairs and paternal tone seemed to make an impression upon him, repeated the question, and he answered, in a calm but resolute tone, "*Because I want to die!*" These were the only words that this cruel and memorable inquisition extracted from him.'

For these details, M. de Beauchesne, *more suo*, gives us no warrant, but they are confirmed *en gros* by the Journal of Madame Royale, cited in a former page. And there is another—in this respect unexceptionable—witness to the main points, of whom M. de Beauchesne does not seem to have been aware. In the *Mémoires de Lombard* we find Barras's own account of his visit. He confesses that he saw the boy, and found him in a deplorable state of filth, disease, and debility; it was stated to him that he neither ate nor drank—he would not speak, could not stand, and lay bent up in a kind of cradle, from which it was torture to move him. His knees were so swelled that his trowsers had become painfully tight. Barras had them cut open at the sides, and found the joints 'prodigiously swollen and livid.' Barras concludes this picture by relating, in a tone of self-satisfaction, that he immediately ordered the attendance of a medical man, and, 'after having scolded the commissary and the *garçon de service* for the filth in

which the child was left, he retired!' He adds, indeed, that he returned next day, and saw the doctor (whose name he had forgotten) offer the little patient a draught which he had ordered, but which the child—though still without speaking—refused to take: the doctor whispered Barras that he might possibly have heard of the fate of his father, mother, and aunt, and suspect that they now wanted to *get rid of him* (*se défaire de lui*); so, 'to encourage him, the doctor poured out the draught into a glass, and was about to taste it, when the poor child, guessing his thoughts, hastened to seize it, and drank it off.' The doctor told Barras that the boy had not long to live; and this, said Barras, 'was the last I saw of him.' M. de Beauchesne's authorities (whatever they are) make, we see, no mention of Barras's having seen the boy, nor of his *personal* interference, which, indeed, is hardly reconcilable with some of the details we have just given; but Barras's own confession corroborates all the more important facts of the case, and the subsequent indifference of the new government to the state of the child, who lingered for near a year later in a condition almost equally deplorable.

We now resume M. de Beauchesne's narrative. By the remonstrances of Laurent, a little air and light were admitted into the room; a woman was permitted, though after much hesitation, to wash and comb the boy. One of the municipals, who happened to be a surgeon, was allowed to clean and dress the sores on the head and neck—an operation which, as well as that of the comb, was, from long neglect, become extremely painful. The vermin were expelled, an iron bed and clean bedding were supplied, a suit of decent clothes granted; and the grated door was replaced by the original one. These were but ameliorations to which the most odious convicted criminal would have been entitled; but all the other rigours of the prison were still maintained. The child was kept in the solitary confinement of his one cell. The chief authority in the Temple remained in the municipal body, who seemed afraid that, if they deviated from the severity of their predecessors, they were likely to incur their fate. Laurent himself was not allowed to see the boy except at his meal-times, and always then in presence of the municipals; and, when at last he wearied them into permission to take him occasionally to the leads of the tower to breathe the fresh air, it was only under their watch-dog superintendence. Even in these short breaks in his solitude he never

spoke, and seemed to take little notice of what was passing. There was one exception: on his way to the leads he had to go by the wicket that conducted to what had been his *mother's* apartment; he had passed the first time without observing it, but on returning he saw it, started, pressed the arm of Laurent, and made a sign of recognition, and ever after paused at the place, and once showed a wish to enter the room, which the municipal in attendance prevented by telling him that he had mistaken the door. He knew, of course, the death of his father, but he was in ignorance of that of his mother, whom, as well as his aunt, he still believed, as we shall see, to be alive in the Tower.

During this period Laurent had also the custody of Madame Royale, who bears, in her Mémoires, testimony to the decency of his manners, and kindness of his treatment of her, and to his well-meant but less successful endeavours to alleviate the sufferings of her brother.

At last, however, the *quasi* solitary confinement to which Laurent found himself condemned was more than he could endure, and he solicited to be allowed an assistant and companion in his duties. This was granted; and, by some secret influence of the friends of the royal family, the son of an upholsterer of the name of Gomin was associated *en second* to Laurent in the care of the children. Gomin was a person of mild and timid character, who had great difficulty in reconciling the severe orders of his employers with his secret sympathy with the prisoners. Little change, however, was made in the regulations, except that cleanliness and civil language were substituted for filth and insult. The child was still locked up alone, except at meals, which were always served in presence of the two guardians and a municipal, and frequently embittered by the cynical insults of the latter. These Commissaries were elected in turn by each of the forty-eight sections of Paris, and were relieved every twenty-four hours; so that the régime was subject to a great variety of tempers and caprices, of which good-nature was the rarest. The breakfast, at nine, was a cup of milk *or* some fruit: the dinner, at two, a plate of soup, with a '*small bit*' of its *bouilli*, and some *dry* vegetables (generally beans): a supper at eight, the same as the dinner, but without the *bouilli*. He was then put to bed and locked up alone, as in all other intervals between the meals, till nine the next morning. When the commissary of the day happened to look good-humoured, the

guardians would endeavour to obtain some little *adoucissement* in the treatment of the child—such as his being taken to the leads, or getting some pots of flowers, which delighted him with the memory of happier days, and in which he took more interest than in anything else. One day (the 14th November, 1794) there came, with a stern air, loud voice, and brutal manners, a person by name Delboy—he threw open all the doors, pried everywhere, gave his orders in a rough imperious tone, that at first frightened both guardians and prisoner, but by and by surprised them by the frank and rational, and even kind, spirit of his directions. When he saw the dinner he exclaimed,—

' " Why this wretched food? If *they* were still at the Tuileries I would assist to famish them out; but here they are our prisoners, and it is unworthy of the nation to starve them. Why these window-blinds? Under the reign of *Equality* the sun at least should shine for all. Why is he separated from his sister? Under the reign of *Fraternity* why should they not see each other?" Then addressing the child in a somewhat gentler tone, " Should you not like, my boy, to play with your sister? If you forget your origin, I don't see why the nation should remember it." Then turning to the guardians, " 'Tis not his fault if he is his father's son—he is now nothing else than an *unfortunate child;* the *unfortunate* have a claim to our humanity, and the country should be the mother of all her *children.* So don't be harsh to him." '

All he said was in the same blustering sententious style, ' combining,' says M. de Beauchesne in his own rhetorical way, ' the manners of Diogenes with the charity of Fenelon.' Another of Delboy's phrases is worth repeating. In discoursing (as we presume) of the character of his colleagues, he declaimed against

' those crafty hypocrites who do *harm to others without making a noise*—these are the kind of fellows who invented the *air-gun.*'

Such a voice had never before been heard in the Temple, and occasioned a serious sensation, and something like consternation; but it at last encouraged Gomin to ask his permission that the lamp in the anteroom, from which the only light of the child's dungeon was derived, should be lighted at dark. This was immediately granted; and Diogenes-Fenelon departed, saying to the astounded guardians as he took his leave,—

' " Shall we ever meet again? I think not; our roads are not likely

to meet. No matter—good patriots will recognise each other; men of sense may vary their opinions—men of honour never change their feelings and principles. We are no *Septembriseurs*. Health and fraternity." '

The reign of this '*bourru bienfaisant*' lasted but a few hours, and (except as to lighting the lamp) left no traces. Laurent and Gomin were afraid to make any change on such ephemeral authority. About the same time sentiments like those which Delboy had blurted out in the prison were heard timidly insinuated in society, and even in more than one newspaper. This only exasperated the fears and malignity of the Convention, and its speeches and decrees seemed, as to the treatment of the child, to reveal as strongly as before the resolution '*de s'en défaire.*'

The daily change of Commissioners produced an alternation of gross vexations and slight indulgences not uninteresting, but which our space does not allow us to follow. One or two instances will suffice for the rest. On the 23rd February, 1795, the Commissary was one Leroux—a '*terroriste arriéré*'—*terrorist out of date*—who adored the memory of Robespierre, and hoped for the revival of his party. He insisted on visiting all the apartments, and was particularly anxious to see how those 'plucked *roitelets* looked without their feathers.' When he entered Madame Royale's room she was sitting at work, and went on without taking any notice of him. 'What!' he cried, 'is it the fashion here not to rise before the *people?*' The Princess still took no notice. The brute revenged himself by rummaging the whole apartment, and retired, saying, sulkily, '*Elle est fière comme l'Autrichienne.*' When he visited the boy it was only to insult him. He called him nothing but the *son of the Tyrant*, ridiculed his alleged illness, and, when Laurent and Gomin timidly ventured to produce Delboy's charitable maxim 'that he could not help being the son of his father,' they were silenced by doubts as to their own patriotism. 'Ah, the children of tyrants are not to be sick like other people! It is not, forsooth, his fault that he was born to devour the sweat and blood of the people! It is not the less certain that such monsters should be strangled in their cradle!' (ii. 294.) He then established himself for the evening in the anteroom—called for cards and wine—the wine to drink toasts 'to the death of all tyrants,' and the cards to play picquet with Laurent. His nomenclature of the figure cards at picquet was not *kings* but *tyrants*—'*Three tyrants*'—'*Fourteen*

tyrants.' The queens were '*citoyennes*,' and the knaves '*courtiers.*' The royal boy seemed not to understand, at least not to notice, these terms, but was much interested in overlooking the game, and hearing for the first time for some years people speaking to one another of something else than his own sufferings. The evening, however, ended ill. Leroux's Jacobinical fury was inflamed by drinking, and he made an uproar that terrified the child. He was at last got out of the room, and conducted to his bed on the lower story. But this accident had a favourable result. Leroux had called for cards, and thereby authorised their introduction; and the child's pleasure in seeing them induced Gomin, between Leroux's departure and the coming of his successor, to introduce two packs, with which the little prisoner amused himself *for the rest of his life!* The next Commissary happened to be a toyman; he took pity on the boy, and, at Gomin's suggestion, sent him, three days after, two or three toys. But these were trifling indulgences; and the continued interdiction of air and exercise, and the frequent insults and severities of the capricious Commissaries, were gradually aggravating the illness that had for some time past seriously alarmed the guardians, though the Commissaries in general only laughed at it. About January and February, 1795, his malady assumed a more rapid and threatening character. He grew more melancholy and apathetic; he became very reluctant to move, and, indeed, was hardly able to do so; and Laurent and Gomin were forced to carry him in their arms. The district surgeon was called in, and in consequence of his opinion a delegation from the Commune examined the case, and reported that

'the little Capet had tumours at all his joints, and especially at his knees—that it was impossible to extract a word from him—that he never would rise off his chair or his bed, and refused to take any kind of exercise.'

On this report a sub-committee of the Committee de *Sûreté-Générale* was delegated to visit the child: it consisted of one *Harmand* (of the Meuse), who on the king's trial voted for banishment, and *Mathieu* and *Reverchon*, who voted for death. These men found such a state of things that they thought (as Harmand himself afterwards confessed, appealing also to his colleagues who were still living)—

'that, *for the honour of the Nation*, who knew nothing of these horrors

—for that of *the Convention*, which was, in truth, also ignorant of them—and for that of the guilty *Municipality* of Paris itself, who knew all and was the cause of all these cruelties—we should make no public report, but only state the result in a secret meeting of the committee.'—ii. 309.

So strange a confession—that public functionaries suppressed the facts they had been appointed to inquire into for the honour of those who had committed and sanctioned the crimes—is sufficiently revolting, but it is much more so that no measures whatsoever were taken to correct or even alleviate the cruelties that they had reported. Harmand's account of the affair was not published till after the Restoration (as M. de Beauchesne notices with something of suspicion as to its accuracy), and there can be little doubt that he then modelled it so as to excuse, as far as he could, his own inhumanity or pusillanimity, in having made no effectual attempt to remedy the mischief that he had discovered. The only apology that can be made for him is, that he was sent, in a few days after, on a mission to the armies; and it is possible, and even likely, that he was thus sent out of the way to prevent his taking any steps in the matter. The substance, however, of his statement is fully confirmed by the evidence of Gomin, though the latter disputed some small and really insignificant details. The most striking circumstance was the fixed and resolute *silence* of the child, from whom they, no more than the former Commissaries of the Commune, were able to extract a single word. This silence Harmand dates from the day on which he was forced to sign the monstrous deposition against his mother — a statement which Gomin denies, and, on this denial of a fact which either party could have only from the report of others, M. de Beauchesne distrusts Harmand's general veracity. We think unjustly. For, though Gomin might contradict the unqualified statement of his *never* having spoken from that very day, he himself bears testimony that the exceptions were so rare and so secret as to be utterly unknown, except to the two or three persons whose unexpected kindness obtained a whisper of acknowledgment from the surprised though grateful boy. Nay, when Gomin first entered on his duties, 'Laurent foretold that he would not obtain a word from him,' which implies that he had not opened his lips to Laurent. The report of the Commune which preceded Harmand's visit also states, as we have seen, that he would not speak: Harmand and

his colleagues found the same obstinate silence; and we, therefore, do not see that Harmand's accuracy is in any degree impugned by Gomin's secret knowledge that the child, though mute to all the rest of his visitors, had spoken to him and to one or two others, who were afraid to let it transpire. It may be too much to assert that this '*mutisme*' began immediately on the signature of the deposition of the 6th October, because there seems good reason to deny that he had any share in that deposition except signing it; he probably could not have understood its meaning, and unquestionably could know nothing of the use that was made of it—indeed, it is certain that he *never* knew of his mother's death. But it is equally certain that, from some unspecified date soon after that event, and for some secret reason which we can only conjecture, he condemned himself to what may be fairly called absolute silence. If he had any idea of the import of the depositions which had been fabricated for him, he may have resolved not to give another opportunity of perverting what he might happen to say; and the constant and cruel insults which he had to undergo as the '*son of the tyrant*,' the '*roitelet*,' the '*king of La Vendée*,' and the like, may have awakened in his mind some sense of his dignity, and suggested the refuge of silence.

Such considerations we can imagine to have dawned even on that young intellect; but in addition to, or even exclusive of, any metaphysical motives—the murder of his father, which he knew—the thoughts of his mother, which, as we shall see, troubled and tormented him—his separation from his sister and aunt—a vague consciousness that he had done something injurious to them—and, above all, the pain, prison, privations, and punishment—in short, the terror and torture which he himself endured—sufficiently account for the atrophy both of mind and body into which he had fallen, and for the silence of the dungeon, so soon to become the silence of the grave. And it is certain that, even in this extremity, he had more memory and sensibility than he chose to show. Gomin's timidity, not to say terror, of compromising himself, rendered his general deportment reserved and even severe; but, one evening—Thursday, 12th March, 1795—when he was alone with the child (Laurent and the Municipal of the day being absent at their *club*), he showed him some unusual marks of sympathy, and proposed something to gratify him. The boy looked up suddenly

at Gomin's countenance, and, seeing in it an expression of tenderness, he rose and timidly advanced to the door, his eyes still fixed on Gomin's face with a gaze of suppliant inquiry. 'No, no,' said Gomin, 'you know that *that* cannot be.' 'I *must see Her!*' said the child. '*Oh, pray, pray, let me see Her once again before I die!*' Gomin led him gently away from the door to his bed, on which the child fell motionless and senseless; and Gomin, terribly alarmed—and, as he confessed, as much for himself as his prisoner—thought for a time that he was no more. The poor boy had long been, Gomin suspected, meditating on an opportunity for seeing his *mother*—he thought he had found it, and his disappointment overwhelmed him. This incident softened still more the heart of Gomin.

A few days after there was another sad scene. On the 23rd of March, the Commissary of the day, one Collot, looking stedfastly at the child, exclaimed, in a loud doctoral tone, 'That child has not six weeks to live!' Laurent and Gomin, shocked at the effect that such a prophecy might have on the child, made some mitigating observations, to which Collot replied, with evident malignity, and in coarser terms than we can translate, 'I tell you, citizens, that within six weeks he will be an idiot, if he be not dead!' The child only showed that he heard it, by a mournful smile, as if he thought it no bad news; but, when Collot was gone, a tear or two fell, and he murmured, '*Yet I never did any harm to anybody.*'

On the 29th of March came another affliction. Laurent's tastes and feelings were very repugnant to his duties in the Temple, though he was afraid of resigning, lest he should be suspected of *incivisme;* but he had now, by the death of his mother, an excuse for soliciting a successor. It was granted, and he left the Temple with the regret of everybody. The innocence and gentle manners of the child had softened his republicanism, and reconciled him to the 'son of the tyrant.' The Prince at parting squeezed his hand affectionately, and saw his departure with evident sorrow, but does not seem to have spoken.

One Lasne succeeded him—his nomination and instalment were characteristic of the times. He received a written notice of his appointment and a summons to attend at the Commune to receive his credentials. Not coming at once, two gendarmes, armed police, were sent, who *took* him from his residence, and conducted

him straight and suddenly to his new post. Lasne had served in the old Gardes Françaises, and this caused his election as captain of grenadiers in the St. Antoine battalion of the National Guards. He was now *by trade* a master house-painter—an honest man, of the moderate republican party, with the air and somewhat of the rough manner of the old soldier. It was on the 16th February, 1837, that M. de Beauchesne, as he tells us, 'first saw Lasne, in whose arms Louis XVII. had died;' but the public had an earlier acquaintance with Lasne, which we wonder that M. de Beauchesne has not noticed. He was a principal witness on the trial of the *Faux Dauphin*, Richemont, in October, 1830, and then gave in substance the same account of his mission in the Temple and of the death of the young king that he again repeated without any material addition or variation to M. de Beauchesne.

For three weeks the child was as mute to Lasne as he had been to the others. At last an accident broke his silence. Lasne, having been one day on guard at the Tuileries, had happened to see the Dauphin reviewing a regiment of boys, which had been formed for his amusement and instruction; and in one of his allocutions (we cannot call them conversations) to the silent child he happened to mention the circumstance, and repeated something that had occurred on that day; the boy's face suddenly brightened up, and showed evident signs of interest and pleasure, and at last, in a low voice, as if afraid of being overheard, he asked, '*And did you see me with my sword?*' *

Though the guardians were equally responsible for both the prisoners, Lasne was especially attached to the boy, and Gomin to Madame Royale, whom at last he accompanied on her release, and on the Restoration became an officer of her household.

Lasne, a busier and bolder man than Gomin, soon discovered that the boy, whom he could barely recognise for the healthy and handsome child whom he had seen, *with his sword*, at the Tuileries, was in a very dangerous state, and he induced his colleague to join him in inscribing on the register of the proceedings of the Temple, '*The little Capet is indisposed.*' No notice being taken of the entry, they repeated it in a day or two, in more positive terms, '*The little Capet is dangerously ill.*' Still no notice. 'We

* That sword, of which M. de Beauchesne gives a drawing, still exists (or did lately) in the *Musée de l'Artillerie* at Paris.

must strike harder,' said the guardians; and now wrote that '*his life was in danger.*' This produced an order (6th May, 1795) for the attendance of M. Desault, one of the most eminent physicians of Paris. Desault examined the patient, but could not obtain a word from him. He pronounced, however, that he was called in too late—that the case was become scrofulous, probably from a constitutional taint of the same disease of which the elder Dauphin had died in 1789, aggravated by the hard treatment and confinement of so many years; and he had the courage to propose that the patient should be immediately removed to the country, where change of air, exercise, and constant attention, afforded the only chance of prolonging his life. The Government, who desired no such result, paid no attention to the advice, and Desault had nothing left but to order friction of the tumours at the joints, and some trivial potions which it was found for a long time impossible to persuade the child to swallow: whether he wished to die, or was, on the contrary, afraid of poison, did not appear; but to remove the latter idea, if it existed, both Gomin and Lasne tasted the medicine; and at last, at Lasne's earnest entreaties, and as if it were to oblige *him*, the medicine was taken, and, as M. Desault himself expected, produced no change in the disease; but there was an improvement in his moral condition—the care and kindness of the benevolent doctor opened his lips—he answered his questions, and received his attentions with evident satisfaction; but, aware that his words were watched (the doctor was never left alone with him), the little patient did not venture to ask him to prolong his civilities, though he would silently lay hold of the skirt of his coat to delay his departure.

This lasted three weeks. On the 31st May, at nine o'clock, the Commissary of the day, M. Bellenger, an artist, who had been, before the Revolution, painter and designer to *Monsieur*, and who still retained sentiments of respect and affection for the royal family—went up into the patient's room to wait for the Doctor. As he did not appear, M. Bellenger produced a portfolio of drawings which he thought might amuse the boy, who, still silent, only turned them over heedlessly; but, at last, the Doctor still not appearing, Bellenger said, '*Sir*, I should have much wished to have carried away with me another sketch, but I would not venture to do so if it was disagreeable to you.' Struck with the unusual appellation of '*Sir*,' and Bellenger's

deferential manner, his reserve thawed, and he answered, '*What sketch?*' '*Of your features; if it were not disagreeable to you, it would give me the greatest pleasure.*' '*It would please you?*' said the child, and a gracious smile authorised the artist to proceed. M. Desault did not come that day—nor at the usual hour the next. Surprised at his absence, the Commissary on duty suggested the sending for him. The guardians hesitated to take even so innocent a step beyond their instructions; but a new Commissary arrived, and terminated their doubts by announcing that 'it was needless—*M. Desault died yesterday.*' A death so sudden, and at such a critical moment, gave rise to a thousand conjectures; the most general was that M. Desault, having given his patient poison, was himself poisoned by his employers to conceal the crime. The character of the times and the strange circumstances * of the case gave a colour to such a suspicion, but there was really no ground for it. Desault was a worthy man, and, as Madame Royale has simply and pathetically said, 'the only poison that shortened her brother's days was filth, made more fatal by horrible treatment, by harshness, and by cruelty, of which there is no example.'

The child now remained for five days without any medical attendance; but, on the 5th June, M. Pelletan, surgeon-in-chief of one of the great hospitals, was named to that duty. This doctor—'sent,' says M. de Beauchesne, 'for form's sake, like a counsel assigned to a malefactor'—had, however, the courage to remonstrate loudly with the Commissaries on the closeness and darkness of the sick room, and the violent crash of bolts and bars with which the doors were opened and shut, to the manifest disturbance and agitation of the patient. 'If you have not authority,' he said, 'to open the windows, and remove these irons, at least you cannot object to remove him to another room.' The boy heard him, and, contrary to his invariable habit, beckoning this new friend to come near him, he whispered, '*Don't speak so loud, for* THEY *might hear you overhead, and I should be sorry they*

* An additional circumstance of suspicion was, the different dates *officially* given to Desault's death. He certainly died on the 1st of June; yet the Report of the *Comité de Sûreté Générale* to the Convention on the subject states that Desault died on the 4th. This was, no doubt, an accidental mistake, but it was a strange one in so fo mal a document—the more so because it shortened the surprisingly short interval between the deaths of the doctor and his patient from *six* days to *three*.

knew I was ill, it would alarm them.' '*They*' were his *mother* and *aunt*, who he thought were still living. The Commissary of the day—one Thory (a baker)—whose natural sympathy was thus fortified by the decided requisition of the surgeon, consented; and a room in the small tower, which had been the drawing-room of the archivist of the Order, was instantly prepared for the reception of the patient. The kind-hearted Gomin hastened to carry him in his arms—as he was no longer able to move himself—the movement caused him great torture; and his eyes, so long unaccustomed to the full light of day, were painfully dazzled: the sight, however, of the sun and the freshness of the air through a large open window soon revived and delighted him, and in a few minutes he turned on Gomin a look of ineffable gratitude and affection; but evening came, and from eight o'clock till eight next morning he was again locked up alone. On the morning of the 6th June Lasne rubbed his knees, and gave him a spoonful of tisan, and, thinking him really better, dressed him, and laid him on the bed. Pelletan arrived soon after. He felt the pulse, and asked him whether he liked his new room. '*Oh, yes!*' he answered, with a faint, desponding smile, that went to all their hearts. At dinner-time, just as the child had swallowed a spoonful of broth, and was slowly eating a few cherries from a plate that lay on his bed, a new Commissary, of the terrible name of *Hébert*, and worthy of it, arrived. 'Eh! how is this?' said he to the guardians; 'where is your authority for thus moving this *wolf-cub?*' 'We had no special directions,' replied Gomin, 'but the doctor ordered it.' 'How long,' retorted the other, 'have *barbers* (*carabins*) been the Government of the Republic? You must have the leave of the Committee—do you hear?' At these words the child dropped a cherry from his fingers, fell back on the bed, and hid his face on the pillow. Then night came, and again he was locked up alone, abandoned to his bodily sufferings and to the new terrors which Hébert's threat had evidently excited.

Pelletan had found him so much worse, that he solicited the Committee of *Sûreté Générale* for an additional medical opinion; and M. Dumangin, first physician of another great hospital, was next day (Sunday, 7th June) sent to assist him. Before they arrived the patient had had a fainting fit, which seemed to portend immediate death; but he recovered a little. The doctors, after a consultation, decided that there were no longer any hopes—that art

could do nothing—and that all that remained was to mitigate the agonies of this lingering death. They expressed the highest astonishment and disapprobation of the solitude and neglect to which the boy was subjected during the whole of every night and the greater part of every day, and insisted on the immediate necessity of giving him a sick-nurse. The Committee, by a decree of the next day (8th June), consented—as they now safely might, without any danger of the escape of their victim; but on the night of the 7th the old rule was still followed, and he was locked up alone. He felt it more than usual—the change of apartment had evidently revived his hopes—he took leave of Gomin with big tears running down his cheeks, and said, '*Still alone, and* MY MOTHER *in the other tower!*' But it was the last night of suffering.

'When Lasne came in the morning of the 8th, as usual, he thought him better; the doctors, who arrived soon after, thought otherwise; and their bulletin, despatched from the Temple at 11 A.M., announced the danger to be imminent. Gomin now relieved Lasne at the bedside; but remained for a long time silent, for fear of agitating him, and the child never spoke first; at last Gomin expressed his sorrow at seeing him so weak. '*Be consoled,*' he replied, '*I shall not suffer long.*' Overcome by these words, Gomin kneeled down by the bedside. The child took his hand and pressed it to his lips while Gomin prayed.

'And now,' says M. de Beauchesne, 'having heard the last words uttered by the father, the mother, and the aunt—admirable and Christian words—you will be anxious to gather up the last words of the royal child—clearly recollected and related by the two witnesses to whom they were addressed, and by me faithfully transcribed from their own lips.'

After the scene just described, Gomin, seeing him stretched out quite motionless and silent, said, 'I hope you are not in pain.' '*Oh yes,*' he replied, '*still in pain, but less—the music is so fine.*' There was no music—no sound of any kind reached the room. 'Where do you hear the music?'—'*Up there.*' '*How long?*'—'*Since you were on your knees. Don't you hear it? Listen! listen!*' And he raised his hand and opened his great eyes in a kind of ecstacy. Gomin continued silent, and, after a few moments, the boy gave another start of convulsive joy, and cried, '*I hear my mother's voice amongst them!*' and directed his eyes to

the window with anxiety. Gomin asked once, twice, what he was looking for—he did not seem to hear, and made no answer.

It was now Lasne's hour to relieve Gomin, who left the room, and Lasne sat down by the bedside. The child lay for a while still and silent, at last he moved, and Lasne asked if he wanted anything? He replied, '*Do you think my sister could hear the music?—How she would like it!*' He then turned again to the window with a look of sharp curiosity, and uttered a sound that indicated pleasure; he then—it was just fifteen minutes after two P.M.—said to Lasne, '*I have something to tell you;*' Lasne took his hand and bent over to hear. There was no more to be heard—the child was dead!

A *post-mortem* examination, by Pelletan and Dumangin, assisted by MM. Jeanroy and Lassus, eminent practitioners, and of royalist opinions and connexions, attested not only the absence of any signs of poison, but the general healthy condition of the intestines and viscera, as well as of the brain; their report attributed the death simply to *marasmus* (atrophy, decay), the result of a scrofulous disease of long standing—such as the swelling of the joints, externally visible, indicated; but they gave no hint of the causes that might have produced, and did, beyond question, fatally aggravate, the disease.

The poor child was fated to be the victim of persecution and profanation even after death. The surgeon, M. Pelletan, who was intrusted with the special duty of *arranging* the body after the examination, had, *on the Restoration*, the astonishing impudence of confessing that, while his colleagues were conversing in a distant part of the room, he had secretly stolen the *heart*, and conveyed it in a napkin into his pocket; that he kept it for some time in spirits of wine, but that it afterwards dried up, and that he threw it into a drawer, whence again it was stolen by one of his pupils, who, on his death-bed (about the date of the Restoration) confessed it, and directed his father-in-law and his widow to restore the theft; which Pelletan, in consequence, received from them in a *purse*, and which, 'having *handled it a thousand times*, he easily recognised,' and placed it in a crystal vase, on which were engraved *seventeen* stars. A disgusting controversy arose on the authenticity of Pelletan's relique; in consequence of which Louis XVIII., who had at first intended to place it in the royal

tombs at St. Denis, retracted that design, chiefly, it is said, on the evidence of *Lasne*, who strenuously declared that, however inattentive the other doctors might have been, he had never taken his eyes off the body or Pelletan during the whole operation; that no such theft could have been accomplished without his having seen it; that he saw nothing like it; and that Pelletan's whole story was a scandalous imposture. Besides this powerful and direct objection, others arose—from the neglect with which Pelletan confessed that he had treated a deposit which, since he had taken it, he ought to have considered so sacred—from the vague story of the second theft—and, finally, from the doubt of the identity of the object returned by the widow in a purse with that which the pupil confessed to have stolen. The apocryphal object, therefore, remains with the representatives of Pelletan; but the disgrace of his story, whether true or false, is fixed indelibly on his memory.

But this was not all. The very grave of the poor boy became matter of controversy. There is no doubt that the body was buried openly, and with decent solemnity—accompanied by several municipal authorities and his last friend *Lasne*—in the churchyard of the parish of St. Margaret, in the Faubourg St. Antoine; but when Louis XVIII. directed an inquiry into the *exact* spot, with a view of transferring the body to St. Denis, the evidence was so various, inconclusive, and contradictory, that—as in the case of the *heart*—it seemed prudent to abandon the original design, and the remains of Louis XVII. repose undisturbed and undistinguished in a small grassy inclosure adjoining the church, and so surrounded by houses that it is not marked on the ordinary maps of Paris. It has been for more than fifty years abandoned as a cemetery—forgotten and unknown by the two last generations of men even in its own neighbourhood, till the pious enthusiasm of M. de Beauchesne revealed it to us, but now, we suppose, never to be again forgotten, though the place seems altogether desecrated. We cannot understand—whatever good reasons there might be for abandoning a search after the individual grave—why the monarchs and ministers of the Restoration did not, in this narrow, secluded, and most appropriate spot, raise some kind of memorial to not only so innocent but so inoffensive and so interesting a victim.

M. de Beauchesne hints that such was the frustrated desire of the Duchess d'Angoulême. Why a request so pious and so modest should have been rejected by those ministers we are at a loss to

conceive. He announces that he himself designs to place some humble memorial within the inclosure. We doubt whether he will be permitted to do so; but he will at least have the consolation of having in this work dedicated to the object of his reverence and affection a monument which neither the rancour of revolutionists, the neglect of *soi-disant* royalists, nor the terrors of the new despotism can ever obliterate.

ESSAY VI.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, SEPTEMBER, 1835.]

ROBESPIERRE.

1. *Mémoires authentiques de Maximilien Robespierre.* 2 tomes. Paris, 1830.
2. *Mémoires de Charlotte Robespierre sur ses deux Frères.* Paris, 1835.

THE most prominent, yet the most mysterious, figure in the *phantasmagoria* of the French Revolution is MAXIMILIAN ROBESPIERRE. Of no one of whom so much has been said is so little known. He was at first too much despised, and at last too much feared, to be closely examined or justly appreciated. The blood-red mist by which his last years were enveloped magnified his form, but obscured his features. Like the *Genius* of the Arabian tale, he emerged suddenly from a petty space into enormous power and gigantic size, and as suddenly vanished, leaving behind him no trace but terror.

We therefore received with curiosity the two publications whose titles are prefixed to this article, in the hope that they might afford some insight into the personal, and perhaps some explanation of the public, conduct of this mysterious man, who, in the guilty whirl of his revolutionary career, amidst the blaze of the most enthusiastic popularity, in the supreme and despotic omnipotence of a dictator, contrived to bury his private life in a deep and apparently modest obscurity. We have been entirely disappointed. The first, which affects to be an *autobiography* of Robespierre down to the close of the Constituant Assembly, is a manifest fabrication. It contains a few small particulars of his early life, which might have been gleaned from persons who knew him, but the bulk is compiled from the files of the *Moniteur*. We therefore did not consider it worthy a separate notice, and are now only reminded of it by the still more impudent fabrication of the Memoirs of Char-

lotte Robespierre, of which the following is, we believe, a true account.

A young republican of the name of Laponneraye, one of the heroes, it seems, of the *Great Days of July*, 1830, being grievously mortified at the result of that very *untoward* victory, betook himself to the task of enlightening the lower classes of the Parisians by certain lectures on the history of the French Revolution, which he delivered gratuitously on the Sunday evenings in a style that procured for their author we know not how many prosecutions and penal inflictions. In the course of these lectures he undertook the defence of Robespierre, whom he considers as the purest of patriots and the best of men. It happened that in an obscure quarter of Paris there still existed—on a pension originally granted by Buonaparte, but continued by those cruel and bigoted Bourbons, who *never forgot and never forgave*—the sister of the Robespierres! This poor old woman—buried alive under the weight of 74 years, of complicated ill health,* and of her intolerable *name*—must have been surprised, to the whole extent of her remaining faculties, at hearing that name again publicly pronounced, not only without horror, but with the extravagant admiration of the palmy days of the Jacobins. Laponneraye gives a vague and pompous account of the sympathy that soon united their hearts; of the tender friendship to which their common affection for the '*humane and virtuous*' Maximilian gave sudden birth. He solicited the honour of being allowed to call himself her son, and she, it seems, complied with the rational request. On her death, in August, 1834, the *bookseller* states, that 'she left these Memoirs to M. Laponneraye, *qui nous a cédé*'—not *gratuitously*, we suppose—'the right of publication.'

In England the assertion of any man of letters, and of any respectable publisher, that a work was printed from the MS. of a person lately deceased would never be questioned; we regret to repeat that it is quite the reverse in France, and that the assurances given us of the authenticity of the Memoirs of Mlle. Robespierre, not only create no confidence, but would have excited our suspicions even had there been no other evidence.

In the first place, the *publisher*, in an anonymous advertisement

* Cette fille estimable a vendu sa portion de patrimoine pour soutenir ses frères. Des chagrins nés antérieurement à leur punition ont altéré sa santé au point de la rendre incapable d'un long travail.—*Lettre de Guffroy à la Convention* 1794, p. 181.

prefixed to the *editor's*—Laponneraye's—preface, says that Mlle. Robespierre *left* the MS. to Laponneraye. Why does not Laponneraye say so himself? The truth is, he could not; for Mlle. Robespierre's *will* is preserved, and it bequeaths everything she leaves behind in the world to Mlle. Mathon, a person whose family had received and protected, and who herself had attended, the poor old woman to her last hour.

Again: the *publisher* talks of *Memoirs*—but the *editor* himself pretends to nothing but some few scattered *Notes*, which he *admits* that he has *put together according to his own discretion*. But even this very small degree of authority we must question: a few scattered notes arranged at the discretion of such a person as Laponneraye would not be worth much; but we are satisfied that not a line of the work could have been *written* by the pen of Mlle. Robespierre. The style, in our judgment, is evidently that of Laponneraye; at all events, it is that of a journalist *of this day*, and not of a poor old recluse. The modern slang—the neology, the thoughts and phrases all smelling of the *Three Great Days*—are no more like what old Charlotte Robespierre would have hammered out than they are to Marot or Rabelais. But there are other circumstances still more conclusive. Mlle. Robespierre is made to say, that her brother belonged to 'two legislative assemblies *successively*.' This is a slip of M. Laponneraye's youthful memory, which could not have happened to the contemporary and sister. Robespierre was indeed member of two legislative assemblies, but *not successively*—he belonged only to the first and the last; and to that intermediate one, which is called for distinction '*the Legislative Assembly*,' and to which reference is made, it happens that Robespierre did not belong. And again, Mlle. Robespierre complains—and Laponneraye, in his own character, repeats and presses the complaint—that *Le Vasseur*, in his Memoirs recently published, should have been guilty of the *indiscretion* of printing a letter from Mlle. Robespierre to her brother, which was found after his death, and which, she says, has been maliciously garbled and altered, so as to give a very false idea of the said brother's character, and of their fraternal relations. Le Vasseur's Memoirs were a fabrication (proved to be so in a court of justice), made by one Roche, and published from 1829 to 1832.* But Laponneraye, this last historian of the Revolution, seems so

* See Quarterly Review, vol. xlix. p. 29.

stupendously ignorant of the subject he was writing about, as not to be aware that this letter, and with it another* from the younger Robespierre to the elder, concerning their sister, appears in the celebrated '*Rapport sur les Papiers trouvés chez Robespierre, par Courtois*'—read in the Convention soon after Robespierre's death, printed both in quarto and octavo, and distributed all over Europe, *six-and-thirty years* before Le Vasseur's pretended Memoirs appeared.

We, therefore, repeat our entire disbelief that Mlle. Robespierre wrote one line of these Memoirs; though it is possible that Laponneraye may have obtained from her, in conversation, a few trivial circumstances and meagre anecdotes, which he has expanded into an hundred pages; it is evident, however, that even this communication could have existed but to a very small extent; for we cannot understand how any man could have talked even for two hours with the sister of Robespierre without having learned something more interesting, and above all something more individual and characteristic, than the trash which is here given. The only evidence of its approach to truth is its unimportance. If Laponneraye had been *altogether* fabricating, he would certainly have invented something more suitable to the double purpose of panegyrizing the Jacobins and selling his book. We therefore conclude that *some* few facts he may have had from Mlle. Robespierre; while the ridiculous eloquence with which he embroiders these trivial matters is entirely his own.

In looking over—as the examination of these worthless publications obliged us to do—the more respectable works on the French

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* As this letter is short, and not so generally known as the other, we insert it :—

'No. XLII. A.—*Robespierre the younger to his Brother.*

'*My sister has not a drop of our blood in her veins.* I have heard and seen enough of her to satisfy me that she is our *greatest enemy*. She turns our spotless reputation to her own account, in order to rule us, and *to threaten us with some scandalous proceedings on her part which may compromise us.*

'We must take some decided steps against her. She must be sent back to Arras [their native town], that we may be relieved from the presence of a woman who is become our common plague. She tries to give us the character of being bad brothers; her calumnies—widely spread—have no other object.

'I wish you would see *La Citoyenne* Lasaudraie; she could give you full information concerning all the impostors by whom we are surrounded, and whom it is most important to detect. A certain St. Felix seems to be of the clique. . . . .'—*Rapport de Courtois*, p. 177.

Mlle. Robespierre had been once sent back to Arras. Darthé (*Papiers*, i. 149) writes to Lebas, 19 May, 1794, that 'Lebon had returned to Arras the night before last, and brought with him *la Citoyenne Robespierre*.' Guffroy corroborates this, but adds that she soon went to Lille (having been denounced at Arras), and thence returned to Paris. Her letter to Maximillan is dated the 6th July, only three weeks before the fall.

Revolution, we could not but observe how vague, unsatisfactory, and even inconsistent, are *all the accounts of Robespierre.* His name, indeed, occurs in every page—his speeches fill the *Moniteur* —his ambition and his crimes are commonplaces of the historian and the moralist; but the real *objects* and *extent* of that ambition—his *motives* and actual *share* in those crimes, are still involved in contradiction and obscurity. To this obscurity four circumstances have mainly contributed:—1. the natural reserve and mystery of his own personal character; 2. the humble position of his family and connexions; 3. the simultaneous death of all those who were interested in giving any explanation of his motives; and, lastly, his being made the scapegoat of all the surviving villains, who loaded his memory with *their* crimes as well as *his own*, and were careful to stifle any inquiries which might lead to the separation of his real from his imputed offences.

From all these causes it is probable that we shall never obtain a full insight into Robespierre's character, the individual motives of his actions, and the exact scope and aim of his ulterior designs. But something may yet be done—some of his contemporaries are still alive. There exists an immense mass of ephemeral publications which have been but imperfectly examined; and the public archives of France do, or at least did lately, contain a great deal of curious and unpublished matter; all of which, we think, if duly examined, sifted, and arranged, would throw very important lights on this most interesting, and, we must say, still unwritten, history. We have not the pretension of being able to contribute anything to such a work; but in the following hasty and, we are well aware, very imperfect sketch of the events of Robespierre's life, we shall indicate some of the doubts and difficulties which have struck our minds, in the hope of directing, to their elucidation, the attention of *those* who may have more leisure and better opportunities of investigation.*

Francis Maximilian Joseph Isidore DE *Robespierre*† was born

* The July Government of France showed a disposition to conceal whatever it could of evidence concerning the Revolution. Very natural—the King and almost all those in authority under him are the children of the Revolution, who dislike very much to hear of regicides—Septembriseurs and Terrorists.

† It is strange how long his name was miscalled or misspelled. We find as late as 1792 his name given as *Robertpierre.* So late as 1796 in an account of the insurrection of 13th Vendemiaire he is called *Roberspierre.*

When Robespierre first appeared in the world he prefixed the feudal particle *de* to his name. He was entered at

on the 6th of April, 1759.* His father was an advocate at Arras; he lost his mother (Mary Carreau,† a brewer's daughter) when he, the eldest of four children, was seven years old; and his father, soon after his wife's death, fled his own country for debt—kept for a short time a French school at Cologne—thence passed over, it is said, to England—and, finally, to America, and there disappeared. Laponneraye (for it would be idle to keep up the farce of attributing these Memoirs to Charlotte Robespierre) tells us that the father had acquired great consideration by his integrity and his virtues, and was at once honoured and beloved by the whole city of Arras; and suggests, that having been advised *to travel* for a short time to alleviate his grief for the loss of his wife, he did so, and died a victim to his uxorious sensibility—though nobody ever knew when, where, or how. But Laponneraye does not inform us why his sensibility did not take the more obvious course of devoting himself to the care of his infant family, instead of abandoning them in *utter destitution* to the charity of their neighbours.

These Memoirs are very indignant at some biographies which state (improbably enough) that Robespierre's diabolical disposition exhibited itself almost in infancy by his beheading pigeons and sparrows. The Memoirs do not deny, and do not regret, that Maximilian sent thousands of *men* and *women* to the guillotine; but that he should kill *pigeons* and *sparrows*—what an atrocious calumny! Not content with a mere refutation of this slander, the Memoirs undertake to establish the very *reverse:* they confess that he did keep sparrows and pigeons, but so far from beheading them, he would weep at the even accidental death of his little

College as *de Robespierre*—he practised at the bar as *de* Robespierre—he was elected to the States-General as *de* Robespierre; after the abolition of all feudal distinctions he rejected the *de*, and called himself *Robespierre*. It is exceedingly curious that the decree of the National Association, 19th June, 1790, abolishing all titles, has the signature *de Robespierre*, he being one of the secretaries of the Assembly that day. Small as this matter seems, it had serious consequences: Camille Desmoulins, in one of his publications, recalled this disagreeable fact to Robespierre's memory in an *Ingre-doux* tone—half sneer, half flattery—which we suspect was more likely to have contributed to his proscription even than the *Vieux Cordelier* itself. At the moment that Camille revived this unlucky proof of the *aristocracy* of M. *de Robespierre*, it was an imputation that would have sent a less popular man to the guillotine; and Robespierre might well have remembered it with mortal resentment.

* This is the date in the first general list of the members of the States-General; and it seems as if that statement was made by himself: all the late biographies give the year 1760.

† A first cousin of Robespierre's of this name (also a brewer) distinguished himself as a Terrorist at Arras.—*Mém. des Prisons.*

favourites. We shall give one passage as a perfect specimen of the absurd style in which these Mèmoirs have been fabricated :—

'A poor pigeon, forgotten one night by us,' [the sisters,] 'in a garden, perished in a storm. On hearing of this death Maximilian burst into tears; he overwhelmed us with reproaches, which our carelessness but too well deserved, and swore never again to trust us with any of his dear pigeons. It is now *sixty years* since, by a childish negligence, I thus excited the grief and tears of my elder brother, and *even to this hour* MY HEART BLEEDS for it. I seem not to have grown a day older since the tragical end of the poor pigeon so tenderly affected Maximilian and so deeply afflicted myself.'—p. 41.

A pigeon, dying—as if it were a hot-house plant—of being left out a night! and the heart that *still bleeds for it* at the end of sixty years!—sixty years, too, of *such* events as might, we think, have afforded even the sister of Robespierre some better excuse for a perennial bleeding of the heart!

After this we shall spare our readers any further specimen of the style in which Laponneraye inculcates the chief, we might almost say the sole, topic of his work, namely, the *extreme tenderness and humanity* of Robespierre's nature, and his constitutional and almost morbid horror of blood. It is very true that Robespierre, and many other of the bloodiest villains of the revolution, (Marat himself, for instance), began by declaiming against the punishment of death—as indeed they did against *all* existing laws and punishments, and for very obvious reasons. We will even admit that men, not naturally worse than others, may, by faction, frenzy, or fear, be carried away into excesses which in their earlier days they would have contemplated with horror; but it is nauseous to find a scribbler like this Laponneraye stupidly and shamelessly declaiming on the *peculiar* benignity of the most wholesale murderer that, we believe, the world ever produced. We shall, therefore, trouble our readers no further with this point.

A different and more considerable class of writers have been carried, by various motives, into an opposite, yet almost equally false estimate of his character. They represent him as a '*plat coquin*'—a '*niais*,' a low fellow of no abilities, raised to eminence by mere accident, bloodthirsty without object or measure, and instigated to enormous wickedness by a blind and *gratuitous* malevolence against the human race. This is, *à priori*, incredible, and is indeed contradicted by the facts of the case. Robespierre

must have been a man of considerable abilities, well educated, a tolerable writer, an effective speaker, and, at least, a clever party tactician. That he was a respectable scholar may be inferred from an anecdote recorded by Vilatte, a juror of the Revolutionary Tribunal, who chose to call himself Sempronius Gracchus: happening to be in Barrère's room one day, Robespierre came in, and seeing a new face, asked 'Who is that young man?' 'Oh,' said Barrère, ''*Tis Sempronius Gracchus, one of ours.*' '*Sempronius Gracchus, one of ours!*' exclaimed Robespierre. 'No, no; I see you have forgotten your Cicero's Offices: that aristocrat only praises Sempronius Gracchus as a contrast to his sons, and to make them appear to be seditious agitators.' In a season of general brutality, profligacy, and corruption, his manners and conduct were decent, and his personal integrity unimpeached.* He had neither the eloquence of Vergniaud nor the vigour of Danton, but he had a combination of qualities which enabled him to subdue them, as well as all other rivals, and to raise himself to the supreme authority on the ruins both of the kingdom and the republic. He (we know not who it was †) took no unfair view either of Maximilian's character or of that of his successor, who called Buonaparte *Robespierre à cheval*,—a military Robespierre,—and it is probable that if Robespierre, in the crisis of his fate, had possessed or employed military talents, the *Ninth Thermidor* might have been an *Eighteenth Brumaire.* ‡

It is a curious circumstance that both the Robespierres owed their education, their maintenance, and even their profession as advocates, to those *charitable institutions* which they were so active in destroying, and in an especial degree to that *clergy* which they persecuted with such incredible cruelty. Maximilian and Augustin began their education at the college (or public school) at Arras,§

* 'Les Girondins se dechainaient impitoyablement contre Robespierre parceque le succès de ce qu'on appelait sa *vertu* et son *eloquence* les irritait.'—Thiers, ii. 99.

† As the ancient mythologists appropriated all legendary wonders to Hercules, the moderns attribute all political *bons mots* to M. de Talleyrand, and this amongst the rest,—but we suspect undeservedly.

‡ 'Robespierre was arrested for want of courage. Had he mounted on horseback he would probably have been followed by the same multitude which next day covered him with maledictions.'—*Mercier*, N. T., 248.

§ His 'condisciples' here were Camille Desmoulins, Lebrun, Sulleau, Duport du Tertre. Freron, who gives the account, alone died *in his bed*. (See Freron's note, Pap. i., 154.) We do not venture to say that Freron died a *natural death*, for he was appointed Sous Prefet of St. Domingo, and, accompanying Leclerc's army to that pestilential island, died of the fever soon after his arrival.

where Maximilian showed, at the age of ten or eleven, such dispositions as, coupled with his destitute state, attracted the notice and charity of the neighbouring clergy, and, amongst them, of M. de Conzie, bishop of Arras, who obtained, from the great Abbaye de St. Waast, one of its *exhibitions* to the college of Louis le Grand, at Paris, for the promising and interesting orphan. On his arrival in Paris another benevolent ecclesiastic, M. de la Roche, a canon of *Notre Dame*, took him under his protection, and during eight years Robespierre prosecuted his studies with so much success, and so much to the satisfaction of his patrons, that when his own period of education had been—at the age of nineteen—accomplished, the vacant exhibition was transferred to the younger brother Augustin. M. de la Roche, we are told, died in the earlier years of Robespierre's residence in Paris, but we do not know the name nor the *fate* of the benevolent ecclesiastics who recommended him to the patronage of the bishop. Did they die in the course of nature, before the Revolution, or did they perish in the massacres of September, or were they reserved for the lingering tortures of what was ironically called *deportation*? We trust that these good men, like M. de la Roche, were spared the agonies of the Revolution and the guiltless remorse of having contributed to the elevation of Robespierre. Still more consolatory would it be if we had any reason to believe that even one of his benefactors survived, and had been saved in the general persecution by the gratitude of his pupil. It has been *said*, indeed, that he always exhibited a certain degree of respect and protection to the persecuted clergy, and it has been surmised that he never wholly forgot either his personal obligations to them, or the religious impressions which they had given him. This seems to be admitted by writers the least favourable to his general character; but we confess that we discover no *facts* indicative of such feeling.*

* Michelet, after indulging his republican tastes in an elaborate and apologetical protrait of Robespierre, balances his eulogy by the following anecdote :—'Un fait témoigne du prodigieux endurcissement où *parvint* Robespierre. Un homme, non innocent sans doute, mais enfin illustre à jamais, un des fondateurs de nos libertés, le constituant Chapelier, se tenait caché dans Paris. A la fin de '93, ne pouvant plus supporter sa réclusion, ses angoisses, il écrivit à Robespierre, son ancien collégue, qu'il était caché dans tel lieu, et le priait de le sauver. Robespierre, à l'instant, envoya la lettre à l'autorité, *qui le fit prendre, juger, guillotiner.* Le fait est attesté par M. Pillet, alors commis dans les bureaux de Salut Public, par les mains duquel la lettre passa.' It is but fair to observe that the words *un ient collegue* are here disingenuously employed. Robespierre and Chapelier had been indeed *col-*

Robespierre now dedicated himself to the law, and was admitted, Laponneraye says, to the bar of the parliament of Paris;—we doubt this fact, as we do not find his name in the official list: at all events his residence and his practice were in his native town of Arras, where he obtained some literary reputation as well as some legal success.

As early as July, 1783, we find him distinguishing himself before one of the courts at Arras, in a great cause, in which he created a great deal of interest. The corporation of St. Omer's had decided against the right of a proprietor to erect a paratonnerre. The proprietor appealed to the superior court at Arras, and Robespierre was his council. The following account of this affair (not mentioned by any of his historians or biographers) will be read with interest, as the first mention of 'a name at which the world grew pale.' It is to be found in that curious diary called *Les Mémoires de Bachaumont.*

'3rd July, 1783.—Extract of a letter from Arras.—The cause about the paratonnerre, in which you take an interest, has been before our court three days, and has been pleaded by a M. de Robespierre, a young lawyer of extraordinary merit; he has displayed in this affair—which was, in fact, the cause of art and science against prejudice—a degree of eloquence and sagacity that gives the highest idea of his talents. He had a complete triumph; on the 31st of May the court reversed the judgment of the alderman of St. Omer's, and permitted M. Vezery de Boisvale to re-erect his paratonnerre.'

This testimony, recorded on an occasion and at a time when neither political partiality nor prejudice could have yet attached to the name of the young and obscure lawyer, is a sufficient answer to the excessive depreciation of his natural abilities, to which we have alluded.

Both Laponneraye and the editor of the Memoirs give us, as of Robespierre, a dedication '*to the Manes* of Jean Jacques Rousseau, of some work, the name or subject of which is not told, in which the dedicator says, '*I saw you in your latter days.*' Upon this phrase both the fabricators have raised up an acquaintance between Jean Jacques and Robespierre, which we believe to be a mere

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leagues in the sense of being both members of the first Assembly, but there was no friendship between them; quite the reverse; they were declared enemies, and Robespierre could have been no more expected to shelter or save Chapelier, who was outlawed, than Barnave or Brissot, or any other of his antagonists.

fable. In the first place, the phrase itself implies no acquaintance —the dedicator might have seen him in the street; but we see good reason to suspect the authenticity of the dedication. It is indeed the kind of trash which people at that day used to write about Rousseau, but it certainly would be well for Robespierre's literary reputation if we could exculpate him from having written after he had reached the years of discretion and *was become a senator*, such nonsense as this:—

'Thy example shall be my guide. Thy admirable CONFESSIONS, those high and candid emanations of the purity of thy soul,—[*as filthy and vapid stuff as ever polluted the press*]—will go down to posterity, less even as a *model of taste* than as a *prodigy of virtue*. I will walk in thy venerated footsteps, even though I should leave a name which future ages may not inquire about,—happy if, in the *perilous career which an unheard of revolution opens to us*, I shall remain immovably faithful to the inspirations which I have imbibed from thy writings.'—p. 133.

It was not till long after the assembly of the States General that any one could have talked of the *perils of an unheard of* revolution, and we may be pretty sure that, from the moment of his election, Robespierre was busy with more important matters than dedicating an anonymous pamphlet to the Manes of Rousseau. But such are the scanty and trivial incidents with which these fabricators are forced to eke out their pretended Memoirs.

There are, however, other specimens of Robespierre's early literature, which Mlle. Robespierre may have very probably possessed and communicated to Laponneraye, the very mediocrity or trivialty of which makes an interesting contrast with the terrible celebrity of his after life. Few things contributed more to the bad taste and false morality which prepared and accelerated the Revolution than those *soi-disant* Literary Societies, which propagated themselves over the whole face of France; and by the natural operation of which both the vanity of individuals and an *esprit de corps* became enlisted in the general attack upon all received principles and all constituted authority. One of these Societies—that of Dijon—announced so early as 1750 the ridiculous question, *Whether the arts and sciences had been beneficial to mankind?* Rousseau took the negative side of this thesis, and the success of his paradoxical essay had a great tendency to pervert the minds of both the Societies themselves and of the candidates for their honours;

the young literati despised the beaten track of received opinions, and 'sought for eminence in the heresies of paradox.' Robespierre was one of these neophytes.

In 1784 the Society of Arts and Sciences at Metz proposed a prize for the best essay on the question, *Whence arises the opinion which extends to a whole family a portion of the disgrace inflicted on a criminal by a degrading punishment?—and is that opinion beneficial or otherwise?* For this prize Robespierre became a candidate, and of course took the liberal side of the question; and, in allusion to this circumstance, Laponneraye puts into Charlotte's mouth this significant remark, that Maximilian little thought that he was pleading by anticipation the cause of *his own family*: but she assures—in a sentimental apostrophe—his '*ombre chérie*,' that she is '*all-glorious of belonging to his blood*'—to his *blood*?—yes, that is the very word!

Some time after, the Academy of Amiens offered a prize for an '*Eloge de Gresset.*' Robespierre again entered the lists, but obtained only an *honourable mention*, for none of the essays were thought worthy of the prize. One Dubois de Fosseaux* (a professor, who afterwards became mayor of Arras, and who, Laponneraye states, as if it were something very surprising, from being an admirer, became an enemy of Robespierre) addressed to him some consolatory verses on the bad taste of the judges; which, poor as they are, show that Robespierre had already some admirers. Fosseaux entreats him not to allow—

——————— 'Cette modestie,
La compagne fidèle et le sceau du génie,'

to obscure his merit—

'Ne vas pas, cependant, vouloir priver ta tête
Des lauriers immortels que la gloire t'apprête.'

And proceeding to prophesy his young friend's '*destins glorieux*,' he concludes with a triple compliment to his professional, his moral, and his social character:—

'Appui des malheureux—vengeur de l'innocence,
Tu vis pour la *vertu*—pour la douce amitié!'

But Arras itself was not without one of these Societies, the members of which wore and conferred crowns of *roses*, and called themselves *Les Rosatis*: and in this foolery, we are told, magis-

* Dubois de Fosseaux was Sénateur Perpétuel of the Royal Academy of Belles Lettres at Arras.—*Esprit des Jour.*, Sept. 19, p. 323.

trates, lawyers, judges, priests, and in short all the gravest personages of the town were not ashamed to partake—a small but not unimportant indication of the growing disorder of the public mind. Into this literary union Robespierre was of course admitted; and Charlotte it seems preserved an extempore song with which her brother regaled the society on the occasion of his admission. It is really so curious to see the terrible Maximilian of the Convention, under his softer name of *Isidore*, crowned with roses, and singing '*des couplets galans et spirituels*' to *Messieurs les Rosatis*, that we thank Laponneraye for having preserved the anecdote and a copy of the song; with the first verse of which, rather as a moral than a literary curiosity, we present our readers:

'*Remercimens à Messieurs de la Société des Rosatis.*

'Air—*Résiste moi, belle Aspasie.*

'Je vois l'épine avec la rose
Dans les bouquets que vous m'offrez;
Et lorsque vous me célébrez,
Vos vers découragent ma prose.
Tout qu'on me dit de charmant,
Messieurs, a droit de me confondre—
La rose est votre compliment;
L'épine est la loi d'y répondre!'—p. 136.

Pas si bête, for a convivial improvisation!

We have another but inferior specimen of his versification in the following stanza, addressed to a Lady at Arras:—

'Crois moi, jeune et belle Ophélie,
Quoiqu'en dise le monde et malgré ton miroir,
Contente d'être belle et de n'en rien savoir,
Garde toujours ta modestie.
Sur le pouvoir de tes appas,
Demeure toujours alarmée:
Tu n'en seras que mieux aimée,
Si tu crains de ne l'être pas.'

But the time was now approaching when all these follies were to bear their disastrous fruits. The public mind of France had become so excited and perverted by a variety of causes great and small, and of grievances real and imaginary, that at the proclamation for assembling the States-General the whole nation went mad, and to this hour has never recovered from its insanity, except in the intervals when the strait-waistcoat of a despot repressed, though it was unable to cure them. Amongst the most remarkable

symptoms of the frenzy, was the choice of its representatives; and the prophetic eye of Mr. Burke saw, in the very selection of the National Assembly, a pledge of all the misrule and misfortune which followed. Robespierre, like most of the young provincial lawyers, embraced the revolutionary cause with ardour, and by his opposition to what he called the aristocratical usurpations of the preliminary arrangements for assembling the States,* rendered himself so troublesome to the existing authorities, and so acceptable to the lower classes of electors (for it was almost universal suffrage), that, with little other reputation than that of paradox and turbulence, or any other property on the face of the earth but his *garland of roses*, he was elected member for one of the great provinces of the empire. His colleagues were still more obscure, and so notoriously incapable, that in the first personal account we have ever seen of the members of the Assembly, '*De Robespierre, avocat*,' stands last indeed on the list, but with this note, '*ce dernier se charge de parler pour tout le reste.*'

In the biographies it is stated that Robespierre was for a considerable time a silent member, and when at last he ventured to say a few words was little attended to. The *autobiographical* Memoirs state (and this is one of a hundred proofs of their falsity) that '*he first ventured a few words on the 20th July.*' M. Thiers, in his History of the Revolution, tells us that his speaking was *heavy and pedantic;* and that it was not till after long practice he attained, in the times of *the Convention*, some facility of extemporizing. In this Thiers copies Madame Roland.

'Robespierre seemed to me then to be an honest man. I forgave, in favour of his principles, his bad style and his tedious delivery. . . . . His talent as an orator was below mediocrity—his *triviale* voice, his awkward expressions, his vicious pronunciation, rendered his delivery very tedious,' &c. &c.—*Mém.* i. 350.

I have not adopted this opinion, written in the prison into which Robespierre had thrown his critic, particularly as I find her in more impartial times expressing great admiration of Robespierre. Dumont, a most competent, and certainly not a partial witness,

* Dumont, afterwards so well known and liked in London society, knew Robespierre well. He (Dumont) was the chief projector of a journal called the *Republicain*, in which he was assisted by Duchâtelet, Brissot, Condorcet, &c., &c. It was on this occasion that Robespierre was so little *au niveau* of Dumont and his friends that 'tittering and sneering [ricanant] as was his custom, and biting his nails, he asked, What was a *republic*?'—*Mém. de Roland*, i. 351.

describes livelily a scene which occurred in the very first days of *the Assembly*, in his own presence:

'The clergy, for the purpose of *surprising* the Tiers Etat into a union of the orders, sent a deputation to invite the Tiers to a conference on the distresses of the poor. The Tiers saw through the design, and not wishing to acknowledge the clergy as a separate body, yet afraid to reject so charitable and popular a proposition, knew not what answer to make, when one of the deputies, after concurring in the description of the miseries of the people, rose and addressed the ecclesiastical deputation:—"*Go tell your colleagues, that if they are so anxious to relieve the people, they should hasten to unite themselves in this hall with the friends of the people. Tell them no longer to retard our proceedings and the public good, by contumacious delays, or to try to carry their point by such stratagems as this. Rather let them, as ministers of religion, as worthy servants of their Master, renounce the splendour which surrounds them—the luxury which insults the poor. Dismiss those insolent lackeys who attend you—sell your gaudy equipages—and convert these odious superfluities into food for the poor.*"—At this speech, which expressed so well the passions of the moment, there arose not applause,—that would have appeared like a bravado,—but a confused murmur of approbation much more flattering. Every one asked who was the speaker?—he was not known, but in a few minutes his name passed from mouth to mouth: it was one which afterwards made all France tremble—it was ROBESPIERRE.'—*Dumont, Souv. de Mir.*, 61.

This sally, assuredly, however unjust and ungrateful to his old benefactors, was as ready, as artful, and as eloquent as anything the annals of that Assembly can produce; and although Robespierre cannot be said to have sustained the vigour of this first flight, or to have placed himself on the line of the Mirabeaus, Maurys, Cazales, or Barnaves, yet he certainly very soon distinguished himself from the common herd, both by the frequency and the comparative merits of his discourses.* It is very remarkable how few orators the revolution has produced, first and last. It might have been *à priori* expected that a lively, loquacious people, not remarkable for diffidence, familiar with every species of histrionic exhibition, and electrified through all ranks and classes by the most sudden and violent excitement which ever conflagrated a nation—it might,

* In the *Actes des Apôtres*, the liveliest and cleverest of the anti-revolutionary journals, there is an attack on several of the opposition members, with extracts from their speeches. '*M. de Robespierre*' is quoted *four* times, though no one else is quoted more than *once*. This proves frequency, and *implies* some power of speaking. And in a list (No. 119, May, 1790) of the persons of most distinction in the revolutionary party, 'M. Robespierre' stands *first*.

we say, have been expected that such circumstances would have produced a crowd of orators in the highest sense of the word, and it hardly produced one. Mirabeau, the nearest to that character, made a few extemporaneous *sorties*, the vigour, audacity, and *singularity* of which raised him to a stupendous eminence; but all his *orations* were written, and the best of them, as we are told, not written by himself. The practice of the pulpit (which under the old regime was very *rhetorical*) and the habits of the bar gave facility to a few priests and lawyers; but on the whole, considering that the Assembly consisted of near 1200 members, the disproportion of oratorical ability developed is at first sight unaccountable. We are inclined to suspect that this result is in a great degree attributable to a cause from which a contrary effect might have been expected: we mean the influence of the *tribunes*, or what we call the *strangers' gallery*. The direct and summary authority which these vociferous critics exercised over the members operated in several ways to repress the development of oratorical talent. Few men have in their first essays such nerve, coolness, and self-possession as enable them to face an assembly even of indulgent colleagues, much less a still more numerous and less ceremonious audience in the galleries. Many who might have become *by practice* and cultivation considerable speakers were probably awed into silence by these ferocious critics; and *those* were most liable to be thus awed who, from the delicacy of their taste, the precision of their logic, the elegance of their language, and the moderation of their views, might otherwise have been likely to rank as the greatest ornaments of the Assembly. And not only did the galleries subdue diffidence and delicacy into silence, but they operated by the intimidation of physical force. Members who happened to take the less popular side of a question were outrageously assaulted, their houses were plundered and burned, and in not a few instances they narrowly escaped massacre. That must have been but a bad school of oratory where one side was nearly silenced, and even of the others those only were listened to who pandered to the appetite of the mob by every extreme of exaggeration, brutality, and violence. These causes appear to us to account for the gradual diminution and final suppression of good speaking in the successive National Assemblies, and the immolation (under various pretences) of every man of any oratorical abilities the moment that he evinced the slightest opposition

to the ferocious frenzy of the galleries; and we think that it is a confirmation of our hypothesis, that since the French Chambers have acquired by the Restoration something like independence of the galleries, there has been more good speaking, and a greater number of good speakers, than the republican assemblies (notwithstanding all their boasted abilities and energies) were able to exhibit.

We find, in one of Robespierre's own speeches in the Jacobins, evidence of the enormous number of this auxiliary audience in the first Assembly at Versailles, accompanied with a shrewd hint as to their influence over the intimidated representatives. The passage, besides its historical value, will have some additional interest for those who remember the anxiety that has been shown for an increase of accommodation for the *public* in our House of Commons.

'A still more interesting object is the publicity of the proceedings of the National Assembly; I mean such a publicity as the interests of the nation require, and I am far from thinking that the limited space reserved for the public in the small and inconvenient place of your present sittings (the *Manége*) is sufficient for this essential object, at least in the opinion of those who have *calculated the causes* of the revolution. The animated and imposing spectacle of the *six thousand** spectators who surrounded us at Versailles *contributed not a little* to the courage and energy which were necessary to our success. If to the Constituent Assembly has been ascribed the glory of having prostrated despotism, it must be admitted that the representatives *only shared it with the galleries.*'—*Discours aux Jacobins*, 10 *Feb.* 1792.

It is a fact which we do not remember to have seen anywhere sufficiently stated and developed, that throughout the whole revo-

* It seems hard to believe that the galleries of the Hall *des Menus Plaisirs*, where the Assembly sat at Versailles, though very extensive, could have held anything like this number; but we copy from the original speech before us; and we find in Rivœrol a general corroboration of Robespierre's statement, though not to the precise extent. The celebrated closing of the Hall of the States-General, 20th June, which caused the adjournment to the Jeu de Paume, was, he says, 'partly owing to a project that they had had for some time of removing the amphitheatrical benches, and shutting up the lateral arcades [travées] which surrounded the hall, and where crowds of the lower classes of people used to come.'—*Mém.* p. 19. And again—'The Assembly heaped decrees on decrees—ruin on ruin—to satisfy the people which swarmed [fourmillait] in the *travées* of the hall.'—*Ib.* p. 131. So that the 'sublime scene of the Jeu de Paume' was after all, only acted in order to preserve these enormous galleries—a vital object with the Revolutionists, but one which they could not well avow as the cause of that 'sublime scene.'

lution the galleries entirely directed the assemblies; and although all the historians have noticed the insolence of the spectators on particular occasions, no one has considered it as what it really was —a regular, systematic, organized power, never concealed, never intermitted, rarely resisted, and always predominant—the *vultus instantis Tyranni*, before which the several assemblies all quailed, but most of all that cowardly and imbecile Convention which such historians as Thiers eulogise for its grandeur and energy, while it was in fact the trembling slave of its own brutal galleries. These are important considerations; and although *our* long-established parliamentary habits and traditions may save us from any *immediate* danger on this score, we cannot but see many indications that it is not altogether so visionary, or even so remote, as it may at this moment appear to many of our readers.

The ablest and most popular members of the National Assembly lost themselves successively by an attempt to arrest the democratic current, and to guide as *statesmen* the revolution which they had excited as *demagogues*. So fell Lafayette, Bailly, Mirabeau, Talleyrand, Dupont, Clermont Tonnerre, the Lameths, Barnave, Brissot, Roland, Vergniaud, Danton, and every prominent man in the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies. Robespierre had the instinct, whether of prudence or of cowardice, to repudiate all personal advancement, all desire to take any direct share in the official administration of affairs: thence he obtained the reputation and name of the *Incorruptible:* and by restricting himself to the mere duties of a deputy, and by avoiding all the odium and responsibility of government, this provincial lawyer, whom every one *affected* to despise, but whom we believe they envied and feared, obtained such an ascendancy in the Jacobin Club, and eventually in the Convention and in its committees, as was in practice equivalent to a dictatorship; and he fell at last, when the necessities of his position forced him to take individually a prominent part, and to appear personally as the chief citizen of the republic;— but we anticipate.

During the progress of the National Assembly, Robespierre maintained and increased his popularity by many speeches and motions, chiefly on legal and constitutional points, not inferior in either logic, rhetoric, or practical effect, to those of his rivals, and generally surpassing them in popular favour. Two or three of them are remarkable. On the 3rd of April, 1791, he adopted

and converted into a decree a proposition made by the Directory of Paris on the death of Mirabeau, to dedicate the church of St. Geneviève to the reception of the ashes of illustrious men, with the inscription

AUX GRANDS HOMMES LA PATRIE RECONNAISSANTE.

And Mirabeau was accordingly enshrined in that temple of glory. But on the 26th of November, 1793, the National Convention unanimously decreed that his ashes should be removed and replaced by those of Marat.* On the 30th of May he advocated at great length the *total abolition of the punishment of death*—a prologue, alas! to the utmost extension of capital punishments—nay, of judicial murder—that the world ever saw.

Two others of his propositions, made about the same time, had more success and wider consequences. On the 7th of April, 1791, he proposed and carried a decree to prohibit the members of the Assembly from accepting Ministerial office within four years from the termination of their mission; and on the 14th of May he proposed, and on the 16th advocated in a long speech, the more important decree, which declared the members of the existing Assembly ineligible to the next. Whether this was the selfish proposition of a man who doubted of his own re-election, or the mere impulse of a popularity-hunter, or whether it was the result of a deeper calculation of its consequences, we have no sufficient means of judging. Nor do we think that it had so fatal, or even so great an influence on the progress of the Revolution as the historians generally attribute to it. They allege indeed, plausibly enough, that the new Assembly was thereby deprived of those men who, having had so much experience and worn off the sharp edge of their first excitement, were generally inclined to carry the Revolution no farther; and the king and the royalists are therefore severely censured for having countenanced, as they were said to have done, Robespierre's proposition. Now this reasoning would be very just if it could be shown that there existed any probability that it would have been the moderate and constitutional members of the old Assembly who would have been re-elected to the new. But, on the contrary, it is morally certain that none but the more violent demagogues would have had the slightest chance

* It seems that though the vote was passed the body was never taken to the Pantheon.

of re-election. As it was, not *one* person who had belonged to the privileged orders was chosen, nor more than half-a-dozen *constitutionalists* of any note; the rest were selected from amongst those who in the different districts had exhibited the greatest revolutionary zeal—factious lawyers—infidel sophists—club orators—newspaper-writers,—and unprincipled adventurers of all disreputable classes and characters. In times of such popular excitement every new election must always make matters worse: moderate men either retire or are displaced—only the most violent of the former body are re-chosen—and the new men, eager for distinction, seek it in exaggeration. The non-election of the Constituents was, therefore, in our opinion, not so direct a cause of the anarchy and horrors which ensued, as is generally supposed. All the men of rank, property, and experience would have equally been swept into oblivion, and replaced not only by the more violent Jacobins of the Constituant, but also by the Brissots, Louvets, Rolands, Gorsas, Carras, Guadets, Garats, and hundreds of other names till then wholly obscure—but soon to have such a momentary importance, and such eternal infamy.

Prior, however, to this period an event occurred in which Robespierre bore a considerable, but still undefined share, and which had some important consequences,—we mean the meeting of petitioners against royalty in the Champ de Mars, on Sunday the 17th July, 1791, which terminated so bloodily. We have already mentioned the deprecatory, and certainly prejudicial testimony left by Madame Roland of Robespierre. It is now necessary to explain some circumstances of their friendship and their enmity.

We begin by observing that about the period we are now treating of—the spring and summer of 1791—Robespierre was at the height of his reputation,—sullied by no crime, liable to no moral reproach—accused generally of no political excess except ambition—and one of the most distinguished orators of the National Assembly. The Rolands, on the other hand, were nobody; wholly unknown except in their own circle, and accidentally called to Paris by some local business of the town of Lyons, where he had lately been employed in the small office of Inspector of Manufactures. His wife accompanied him. They arrived in February, 1791.

Roland had already had some previous correspondence with Brissot on economical and statistical subjects, and on this occa-

sion made his personal acquaintance; and Brissot introduced him to Pétion, Robespierre, Brissot, and his political circle, where the liberal principles and practical knowledge of the husband, and still more, no doubt, the personal accomplishments, extraordinary talents, vehement patriotism of the wife, made so great an impression, that they seem to have been very early admittted into the most secret counsels of that party, of which a *cabinet*—a '*petit comité*' she calls it—used to assemble four evenings in the week at her apartments, to discuss and arrange their political movements.

The tone of Mad. Roland's account of her relations with Robespierre would lead us to suspect that she mistook his position and forgot her own, and was surprised at finding him not so docile as the rest of her coterie. She accuses him of reserve, jealousy, obstinacy, and disregard for the decisions of his friends, and, above all, she reproaches him with not being sufficiently assiduous *au petit comité*. Now in all this, if minutely true, we should see no more than the reserve, independence, and perhaps impatience, that a man in Robespierre's high political position might naturally feel and show towards a lady of, *then* at least, such slender claims and high pretensions to govern a party. But we do not believe that the style of familiarity, bordering on contempt, with which she treats Robespierre in her prison lucubrations, existed in their real intercourse; on the contrary, we have a letter of hers to him from Burgundy, after her return from Paris, in a tone of panegyric, and even deference, much more suitable to their relative positions.* At all events, they at first went on very well together, and seem to have agreed thoroughly in their desire to get rid of the *two illustrious heads;* which they eventually did, though at the expense of their own.

It was during this visit of the Rolands to Paris that the flight to Varennes occurred, and the great question in discussion was whether the king's late flight to Varennes was not an abdication, and whether royalty should not be abolished. Lafayette, who held

* Lamartine, by one of his rhetorical figures, misrepresents the main facts of the case. He talks of Robespierre as if he had been nothing but an ungrateful *protégé* of Madame Roland, '*qui l'avait réchauffé dans son sein*;' as if he had had any obligation to her, and had not raised himself to the highest political eminence before he could have known that there were such people in existence.

the King close prisoner in the Tuileries, and who had filled all ministerial and military offices with his own partisans, and hoped to continue Viceroy over the deserted and powerless monarch, of course was for maintaining the puppet-sovereignty. On the other hand, the Orleanists, the Brissotins, and the Jacobins were, as yet, a coalesced opposition, acting together but with different ulterior objects. Such of the Jacobins as were not Orleanists would get rid of the king altogether; the Orleanists, who were the majority of the Jacobins and all the Cordeliers, would have another king; the Brissotins would have been satisfied with either king or no king, if only they were to fill the ministerial, judicial, and administrative offices. This state of parties and their objects are the real clues to all the intricacies of this period of the Revolution. On Friday the 15th July, the coalesced factions decided that the PEOPLE should be invited to sign a petition demanding the abolition. The preparation of the petition was confided to Brissot and La Clos; but the latter, the avowed creature of the Duke of Orleans, having failed to persuade his colleagues to insert a paragraph favourable to the Duke's pretensions to the vacant throne, left it altogether in the hands of Brissot. Mad. Roland, however, confesses that the Orleanist clause was afterwards inserted. Robespierre, already jealous of Brissot, was probably not pleased with the prominence thus given him, and afterwards declared that he disapproved of the whole proceeding, from a *presentiment* that it would be made an occasion and excuse for an attack on *the People*. On that same day, however, the question was decided by the Assembly in the king's favour; and there is no doubt that Robespierre distinguished himself by his violence on this occasion, and was the first to give the signal of the disorder that ensued. M. Hue, a most trustworthy witness, tells us, that on the evening of the 15th, when the Assembly had passed the decree in favour of the king, Robespierre, on leaving the hall, gave the signal for an insurrection, by exclaiming, '*My friends, all is lost—the king is saved.*' The 16th was passed in an agitation throughout the city, so violent that the Assembly called the municipal authorities before it, and charged them to maintain the peace of the capital. Upon this the Jacobin club, whose policy it was never to get into direct collision with the Assembly, 'ordered the petition to be withdrawn—the question having been decided.'

But though the club as a body wished to keep up appearances with the Assembly, no such reserve was necessary on the part of those who called themselves the People. Another petition was therefore prepared, for the signature of which all citizens were invited to attend next day, Sunday, the 17th of July, at the AUTEL DE LA PATRIE in the Champ de Mars.

This meeting was undoubtedly intended to displace the Lafayette ministry, to overawe and perhaps even to attack and dissolve the Assembly, and, at all events, dethrone the king. But it was defeated by an incident which was most probably intended to ensure its success. Very early on the Sunday morning, when the people began to assemble in the Champ de Mars, two men, who for some unaccountable purpose had hidden themselves under the altar, were detected and *murdered*—hanged *à la lanterne*. No rational explanation has ever been given of the object of the two men, against whom no fact was alleged but that they had brought provisions for the day, and had bored holes in the steps of the altar—as some writers have absurdly conjectured, for the indulgence of indecent curiosity. M. Thiers says that they were two Invalides (military pensioners). Some contemporary writers say *one* was an invalid with one leg, the *other* was a hairdresser. But still no hint is given of any reasonable or plausible motive for the murder. M. Bertrand de Moleville thought that they were persons seized accidentally, and put to death for refusing to sign the petition; but they were certainly dead some hours before the petition was produced. The excuse current with the mob was, that they were incendiaries who intended to blow up the altar, and all that should be on it or round it, by gunpowder; but for this there was no colour whatsoever. Still more improbable—indeed we may say, impossible—is the allegation of Robespierre, Mad. Roland, and all the revolutionary orators and writers of the day, that the murders were committed by the orders of Lafayette and the Government as an excuse for the massacre on which they had already resolved. Such a design could not have entered the head or heart of either Bailly or Lafayette; and in truth the dispersion of so formidable a sedition required no excuse. On the whole, our best conjecture is, that it was either an accidental and spontaneous outbreak of a mob familiar with murder, or one of those calculating atrocities which the Jacobin leaders so frequently em-

ployed to intimidate their opponents. But whether accident or design, or by whomsoever perpetrated, the murder assuredly emboldened Lafayette and the Government to take the vigorous resolution of forcibly dispersing the meeting. Martial law was proclaimed; its ensign, the *red flag*, was displayed; Bailly, as mayor of Paris, and Lafayette, at the head of the troops, marched to the Champ de Mars. Some hundreds of the populace were killed, and the sedition suppressed. The Assembly ordered vigorous prosecutions against its authors. Robespierre is not named, but we have an address which he published on this occasion in defence of himself and the People, which shows that he was charged with being a chief cause of all these calamities. In this address he gives little insight into his personal share in the transaction, but he states one point of importance. M. Thiers, who thinks it necessary to apologise for the only act of Lafayette's revolutionary life that seems to us to need no apology, attempts to do so by a gross misstatement of the facts. In the first place, he anachronises the whole affair by confounding into *two* days the transactions of *three;* and, secondly, he states that on the morning of the conflict, Lafayette had appeared on the Champ de Mars, and with the assistance of the police persuaded the mob to disperse; that *after this*, and when it was hoped that all was quiet, the two men were found and murdered; and that *then*, under the express orders of the Assembly, Bailly proceeded with the red flag to the Champ de Mars, and the attack ensued. Robespierre, on the contrary, states (and we cannot disbelieve a statement so publicly made and not questioned at the time) that the affair of the two men had occurred at seven in the morning, and was all over some hours before the meeting of the petitioners, which had been fixed for and was not held before *noon*. He is confirmed by several other authorities, and especially by Madame Roland, who, however, it must be admitted, was not an impartial witness, for she was not only deep in the original intrigue, but she even appeared in the Champ de Mars to countenance and encourage the movement. She relates—'It was on Sunday *morning* that two men were hung when there were no more than thirty persons assembled. I heard it then attributed, with some semblance of truth, to the coalition of the Lameths and others (Lafayette), to have an opportunity of displaying strength, and to

strike terror into them all. Thus this *morning*, assassination committed almost privately served as a *pretence* for shooting the people assembled there *after dinner*.'—Mad. Roland, ii. 273. See also vol. i. 355, where the treachery is charged upon Lafayette by name as an *instrument of the Court*. Lafayette an instrument of the Court! This being the first time—since the affair of Reveillon, in April, 1789 (*antè*, p. 50)—that force was employed to disperse a revolutionary meeting, it made a great sensation, and put a finishing stroke to the unpopularity of Lafayette; Robespierre and all the demagogues were as loud and virulent against 'this wanton assault on peaceable citizens met to exercise their constitutional rights of petitioning,' as our demagogues were at the suppression of the Manchester meeting in 1820. This topic was so successfully laboured by the democrats, and the exertion of this authority was made so odious, that Bailly was displaced,* Lafayette forced to exchange his command at Paris for one on the frontiers, and the agitators, though baffled for the moment, obtained a conviction—which emboldened all their subsequent attempts—that no man would again dare to employ the military force in the repression of sedition.

Though Robespierre professed after its failure to have disapproved of this attempt, and may probably have been jealous of the intervention of the Rolands, and of the selection of Brissot and La Clos as redacteurs of the address, the truth is, that the original movement was Orleanist. It was the crisis of the monarchy. La Clos certainly, as Madame Roland tells us—and as, indeed, is notorious—wished to turn it in favour of the Duke of Orleans, and we suspect that Brissot was at that time in the same interest; but it seems pretty certain that the Rolands, and perfectly so that Robespierre, associated themselves to the projected movement with the purpose of getting rid of Louis, with little or no predilection for Philippe. But whatever may have been Robespierre's secret motives or objects, there is no doubt that he was, not merely deep in the plot, but in some personal danger from its defeat; and it

* Alas! not only displaced, but in November, 1793, put to death on the very spot of his interference on this occasion, with every possible addition of contumely and cruelty. This is perhaps the most remarkable and exemplary scene of the whole revolution.

made, in fact, an epoch in his life. Madame Roland tells us, in the somewhat contemptuous tone already noticed—

'I never saw anything like the terror of Robespierre in those circumstances. There was, in fact, some talk of prosecuting him—probably to intimidate him. Roland and I were really uneasy about him, and we drove to his lodgings,* *au fond du Marais*, at eleven o'clock at night to offer him an asylum.'—*Appel*, 43.

She then proceeds to state how they endeavoured to engage Buzot to make an effort *pour sauver ce malheureux jeune homme.*

There can be no doubt that the anxiety of the Rolands was sincere; for we gather from several passages of Madame Roland's Memoirs that she took an active and even personal interest in this insurrectionary movement. She was present at the Jacobin Club so late as ten at night, on Friday the 15th July, at the tumultuous discussion of the petition which was to be next morning taken to the Champ de Mars.

At noon the next day, Saturday the 16th, we again find her on the Champ de Mars in company with not more, she says, than two or three hundred persons (in another place she says three or four hundred) assembled round the Altar, on which several deputations from the Club of the Cordeliers (which was especially Orleanist), and other fraternal societies, carrying pikes with incendiary inscriptions, were haranguing the audience, and exciting their indignation against Louis XVI.

On the same Friday evening, however, on which the Jacobin Club had voted the insurrectionary petition, the National Assembly had come to its decision in the king's favour, and the Club, whose policy it was never to come to an open rupture with the Assembly, resolved to abandon the petition, and sent directions to that effect to the Champ de Mars. But the agitators were not to be so disappointed; and accordingly notice was given that there would be

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* Robespierre, on his arrival in Paris as a member of the Constituant, took, in common with a young friend (one Humbert), a cheap lodging at No. 8, Rue Saintonge, *au fond du Marais*, as Madame Roland, even though 'writing in the Conciergerie,' haughtily calls it. Robespierre's poverty was rather blazoned than veiled by his friends. We possess a eulogistic pamphlet of this period by Lacroix, of which it is the chief topic. Freron says that he was Humbert's *guest* in the Rue Saintonge, and never made him any return. This house, and two or three at each side of it, were destroyed many years since, and larger and better houses erected on the site.

a meeting of the People next day, Sunday, the 17th, to sign a petition of their own. It seems that she followed the matter up so zealously that she was again in the Champ de Mars on the Sunday, for she describes, in the tone of an eye-witness, that there was a considerable assemblage, and that *Robert*, a noted Jacobin and private friend of her own and of Robespierre, there wrote a new petition, and was in the act of getting it signed, when the military force appeared. And it further appears in another of her scattered memoranda, that when she came home that night, of the 18th, after eleven o'clock, from her unavailing visit to the Rue Saintonge, she found that same *Robert*, the penman of the petition, in her lodgings, where he had come to seek concealment and an asylum. She says that she went to the Champ de Mars from a motive of curiosity, but can it be doubted that it was a patriotic curiosity to watch and to countenance the insurrectionary movement? There is something very curious in her application to Buzot, even as she relates it. The Club of the Feuillants was a rival, set up by Lafayette and his party (at this moment the ministry) against the Jacobins; and Madame Roland's apprehension was, that the Feuillants would come to some violent resolutions to force the government to prosecute Robespierre and his associates. Buzot (who was a special favourite) * was a hot Jacobin (as, indeed, the

* In spite of some indelicate and even coarse expressions in Madame Roland's Memoirs, there runs through them such a strain of dignity and elevation that we have been surprised at reading such passages as the following in the writers the most disposed to admire her. M. Lamartine says, 'Buzot dont la beauté pensive, l'intrépidité et l'éloquence devait plus tard agiter le cœur et attendrir l'admiration de Madame Roland.'—Lamartine's *Girondins*, vii. 15.

He gives no authority for this statement, which is certainly not complimentary to the moral feelings of a married woman; and the less so, because Buzot was himself married, and his wife was one of Madame Roland's few female friends; but the prominent preference which she so frankly gives in her '*Appel à la Postérité*' to Buzot, above all her other friends, inclines me to doubt that there was anything in their friendship to blush at.

M. Thiers says, "Elle respectait et chérissait son époux *comme un père*; elle avait pour l'un des Girondins proscrits une passion profonde qu'elle avait toujours contenue."—Thiers, *Hist.*, v. 312.

We know not whether this means Buzot; but no authority is cited for either the 'passion' or the 'continence.' Perhaps M. Thiers means Barberoux, who, as we have before stated, was more generally reputed the favoured lover; but for that imputation I know no other ground than her calling him Antinous; and, again, I should rather construe this public mention of his beauty as a proof that her admiration was innocent. The like insinuation about Dulaure had probably no ground but the brutality of the infamous Hébert; but Dumouriez, a nearer observer and better authority, produces another candidate for her favour, in his and Roland's college-servant, who was, he says, 'lié depuis

whole coterie was), but she thought the danger so pressing that she urged her friend—not indeed to give up the Jacobins, but—to join the Feuillants,* or, in her own words, '*d'entrer aux Feuillants pour juger de ce qui s'y passait et s'y trouver prêt à défendre ceux qu'on voulait persécuter.*' Buzot, naturally enough, declined a '*rôle qui lui donnerait deux visages;*' and we cannot believe that anything short of an interest personal to themselves could have induced the Rolands to make such a proposition, which after all must have been as useless to them and to Robespierre as it would have been dangerous and discreditable to Buzot.

We cannot here refrain from observing as another of the strange vicissitudes of this terrible drama, that the *malheureux jeune homme*, as they haughtily called him, sent Madame Roland to the scaffold, and Roland and Buzot to more lingering and more deplorable deaths. Both fugitives from Robespierre's triumph over the Girondins, Roland was found dead from suicide in a ditch by the road side,† and Buzot in a forest, where his body, and that of Pétion were found half-devoured by wild beasts; but whether they had died from hardships, starvation, or poison, is not known.‡

Whether Robespierre was himself in the Champ de Mars that day Madame Roland does not say. We suppose not. He seems not to have had, or at least never to have shown, much personal courage; and it was his general policy to avoid all active participation even in the measures he prepared; but we find him in the evening, before the affair was over and while the red flag was yet flying, hurrying (in great consternation, it is said, though under the protection of a mob of *sans culottes*) through the Rue St. Honoré, near the Jacobin Club, where a carpenter of the

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long tems avec la célèbre Madame Roland, et jouait auprès d'elle le rôle d'un amant, soit que cela fut ou non.' *Mém.*, l. iv. c. 5.

* The Feuillants consisted, in December, 1791, of 264 deputies, and about 880 other members.—*Œuv. de Pal.* iv. 32.

† Roland's suicide was as venial—we might say as honourable—in all its circumstances as such an act can be. He had found for several months a secret refuge in a friend's house in Normandy; but when he heard of his wife's death (who herself died with a conviction that he would not survive her loss), he left his asylum, not to expose his friend to danger, and resolutely stabbed himself with a small sword which he carried in a cane, by the side of the high road to Rouen. In his pocket was found a note saying who he was, and that *not fear but indignation had made him leave his retreat when he heard that they had murdered his wife, and that he would not live in a country covered with crimes.*

‡ See the letter of Desforgues, Pap. ii. 190.

name of Duplay,* who lived at No. 366 of that street, exactly opposite the Rue St. Florentin, and who happened to be a zealous Jacobin and a great admirer of Robespierre, invited him to take refuge in his house. Robespierre readily accepted the offer, and as his person was not considered safe, he was persuaded not to return home that night. Duplay had a wife and three daughters, who were all flattered by the presence of the great popular leader, and were prodigal of attentions towards him, and at length Duplay proposed that Robespierre should give up his distant lodgings in the Marais, and become his inmate and his guest. Domiciled in this family, Robespierre sought no other society, and dividing his public time between the Convention and the Jacobins (which were both in Duplay's immediate neighbourhood), he gave all his private hours to this humble circle. Duplay himself received his reward in being appointed, by Robespierre's influence, one of the Jurors of the Revolutionary Tribunal, a place of power and emolument—as was also, we believe, his son. Madame Duplay† became conspicuous as one of the leaders of those ferocious women who sat daily at their needlework round the scaffold, and were called by the indulgent, *Tricoteuses de la Guillotine*, but more properly by the rest of the world *Furies de la Guillotine!* The eldest daughter, Eléonore—who now assumed the classic name of *Cornelia*—aspired, it seems, to be in fact, as well as *name*, the '*mother of the Gracchi*,' by captivating Robespierre; she endeavoured to become his wife, and ended by passing, in the opinion of the neighbours, as his mistress. Laponneraye, on the authority of Mdlle. Robespierre, denies, though faintly, this last imputation:‡ be that as it may, Robespierre was cautious

* This name is sometimes spelled Dupliex, but he is called Duplay in the records of the Revolutionary Tribunal, of which he was a juror, and he and his son are so named in their act of accusation as accomplices of Babœuf.

In 1790, Duplay's number was 362. Buonaparte, who was anxious to erase every trace of the revolution, thought it worth while to pull down the residence of his old acquaintance, and the street called Richepanse, after one of his generals who died in 1807, exactly opposite the Rue St. Florentine, passes over the site—the space between the numbers 404 and 408 (which would be 406) of the Rue St. Honoré. Any one who examines the locality will see that there were few spots in Paris where a new street was less wanting, unless indeed to accomplish Danton's dying prophecy—'*On rasera la maison de Robespierre, on y semera du sel.*'

† Madame Duplay was, M. Lamartine tells us, sent to prison on Robespierre's fall, and there either hanged herself or was hanged by the other female prisoners from the curtain-rods of her bed.

‡ This is asserted by Louvet and all contemporary writers, but denied by M. Lamartine, on the authority, as I conjecture, of the surviving sister, Madame Lebas, with whom, I am told, he had made acquaintance. To this

to excite no scandal, and seems to have aimed at a reputation for moral decency as well as political integrity;* but the general character of the Duplay family does not give us any great confidence in the virtue of *Cornelia*—who seems to have had much of her mother's ferocity, for she, with her sisters and other companions, used to sit at their windows to see the *amusing sight* of the *batches* of victims who passed every day to the scaffold.† The second sister married Lebas, a member of the Convention, and one of Robespierre's most infamous satellites, who, as Guffroy states, persecuted him for having informed him of the ante-nuptial irregularities of his wife's conduct. The third married another member of the Convention, whose name has not reached us. His private society was composed of persons of the same class—Nicholas, a printer—Arthur, a paper-maker—and such men, whom their patron employed as Jurors of the Tribunal, or in similar small offices, and most of whom perished on the same scaffold with him.

Among the numerous attempts which we know were made to obtain the support, or at least to mitigate the opposition, of leading members of the Constituant Assembly, we find nothing to derogate from the title of *incorruptible* that was very early bestowed on Robespierre. Harmand, a deputy to the Convention from the Department de la Meuse, after the Restoration published a small volume of memoirs, of which, as we have already said, some portions are no doubt substantially true, while others are very

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very suspicious source I suppose may be attributed some anecdotes favourable both to Robespierre and the Duplays, for which M. Lamartine gives no authority, and which seem to me very apocryphal.

* Montjoye denies the disinterestedness of Robespierre, and asks how, out of his allowance as deputy—and he had nothing else—he could, besides purchasing a printing-office and paying a corps of body-guards, have dressed expensively, and given expensive dinners at Conflans and St. Cloud? But when this is all that hostility can allege, we may conclude that the common opinion is just. It is generally said that at his death but fifty francs were found in his lodgings; but Meda, the gendarme who arrested Robespierre, and who afterwards became a colonel, states, that he found on him a pocket-book containing bank-notes and bills to the amount of 10,000 francs, which was laid on the bar of the Convention, but was never after heard of—but even this, even if the story be true, was but a small sum, 400*l*.—*Mém. de Meda*. The *Moniteur* attests the delivery of the pocket-book to the Convention; but there is no mention but Meda's (and that is very vague) of its contents. In Courtois' report there is a letter from a correspondent, alluding to sums placed in the English funds—but we believe this to have been a forgery. Mercier says he was avaricious and sold himself to D'Orleans; but he invalidates his own evidence by absurdly adding, 'and to Pitt.'—c. 248.

† See note, p. 249.

apocryphal. He relates that there was at one time a negotiation between Robespierre and the Court, the object of which was his nomination as governor of the Dauphin. This, says Harmand, was conducted by the Princess de Lamballe without the Queen's knowledge, who, when she heard of it, broke it off indignantly. We should have very little reliance on the uncorroborated assertion of Harmand, and are still less inclined to believe that the Princess de Lamballe could have been engaged in any negotiation without the knowledge and consent of the Queen, and above all one so peculiarly and personally interesting to her; and we should have therefore thought the story unworthy of notice if we had not found in Robespierre's speech of the 24th of September, in the first great debate between the Jacobins and Girondins before the Convention was a week old, the following passage:—

'It was I who for three years in the Constituant Assembly was the antagonist of all factions—it was I who opposed the Court and *disdained its presents*.'—*Moniteur*, 25th September, 1792.

This certainly implies that offers had been made to him and rejected; and a subsequent passage shows that they had become a subject of reproach against him—

'It was at the moment that I was denouncing the guilty—it was when before the war I moved for the dismissal of Lafayette, that they (*on*) dared to say that I had *conferences with the Queen and with the Lamballe*.'—*Ib.*

This, we see, does not directly deny the imputed *conferences*, and not at all the more probable fact of negotiations, and we therefore cannot but conclude that there was some foundation for Harmand's report, though he may have been mistaken as to the precise object. Nor will even *that* object appear so surprising, when we carry ourselves back, as we ought to do at every step of revolutionary history, to the *precise time* and circumstances, and recollect that Robespierre *then* enjoyed a reputation not only brilliant but pure—his education had been regular—his talents were unquestionable—his manners decorous and reserved—and his morals irreproachable. How strange, how fabulous, must at first sight seem the imagination of Robespierre, governor of the Dauphin! and yet it may have been thought of. This receives some additional colour from the fact that the appointment of a governor for the Dauphin was at this moment a subject of much

political feeling, and that the King felt a great anxiety, and, strange to say, thought it necessary to spend large sums of money in bribing some party leaders in the Assembly to facilitate the appointment of M. de Fleurineau, which, on the 18th of April, the King communicated to the Assembly; but the Assembly, on the motion of Lasource, a Girondin, only sent the message to its committees, and nothing came of it.

This speech of the 25th of September has brought to our notice an additional instance of M. Thiers' bad faith which ought not to be left unexposed; for, giving an account of this remarkable debate, he affects to give a literal extract from this portion of Robespierre's speech, and distinguishes it by the usual marks of quotation, concluding with the words above cited as to '*opposing the Court, and disdaining its presents.*' But we find in the original report in the 'Moniteur' (26th Sept. 1792), that he added, that he had *despised the caresses of the more seductive party* (parti plus séduisant), *which, under the mask of patriotism, had arisen to destroy Liberty*—meaning, of course, the Orleanists, whom by thus garbling the quotation, M. Thiers endeavours, as he does throughout his whole history, to throw into the shade.

The close of the Constituant Assembly on the 1st of October, 1791, was an additional triumph to Robespierre and Pétion, who, on leaving the hall, were surrounded by an admiring and applauding multitude, who crowned them with oak-leaves, and drew them in their carriages to their residences.

These Tribunes of the People *were now returned* to private life, for the tribunal to which they were elected was not yet installed, and they had time to meditate and appreciate the consequences of their exclusion from the new Assembly. The motives of Robespierre for this apparent self-sacrifice have been much doubted and debated, and have been at last, by most historians, considered as inexplicable on any other hypothesis than the innate envy and rancour of his character. We do not see how hatred or envy of his former colleagues was to be gratified by a measure that applied to himself. The most powerful and brilliant of those colleagues had already disappeared from the scene. He was without a rival in his own party except his friend Pétion, or even in the Assembly except Barnave. Why, then, should he have voluntarily abdicated so distinguished a position—when had he any prospect of a better —nay, of any position at all? To solve this enigma we must

again carry ourselves back to the exact time and circumstances, and recollect that the Robespierre of the Constitutional Monarchy of April, 1791, was not the Robespierre of the Republic of September, 1792, and still less of the dictatorship of 1794. Now, let us see how this matter stood at the first of these dates. No one was yet dreaming of a republic; and though there was a small but active faction that would have changed the person of the sovereign —Louis XVI. for Philippe of Orleans—neither the actions nor the speeches, nor, as far as we know, the thoughts of any one, except Madame Roland, went further than a constitutional and limited monarchy. The Revolution was said, and even thought, to be closed. The prohibitory decrees were passed on the 3rd and 16th April, 1791; but we have been startled at finding, and we think our readers will be surprised to hear, that on the 19th June, *only two months later*, the very three names most prominent in this supposed self-sacrifice—Robespierre, Pétion, and Buzot—were nominated by the electoral body of Paris to the three highest judicial offices in the state: Pétion to be President; Buzot, Vice-President; and Robespierre, to '*the safe and lucrative and most desirable office*,' as he himself subsequently described it,* of *Accusateur Public*, or Attorney-General, of the *Supreme Criminal Tribunal* created by the new Constitution. What higher, more lucrative, or more honourable result and reward of their two years' political service in the Assembly could these three provincial lawyers have expected or even imagined? And might they not have rationally congratulated themselves at having escaped from the risks and chances of the new Legislature into stations the highest that even by any prolonged parliamentary service they could hope to attain?

Thus stood the case on *Saturday, the 19th of June;* and thus is the supposed *self-sacrifice* sufficiently explained. But within forty-eight hours a new, unforeseen, and most unexpected turn of the revolutionary wheel changed the whole aspect of affairs, and with it the individual prospects of the newly-elected magistrates. On the evening of the day that followed their nomination, *Monday, the 20th June*, there occurred the *flight to Varennes!* The whole career of the revolution seemed re-opened, and Pétion, Buzot, and Robespierre were resuscitated, as it were, to political life, with all their former principles and prospects, and with the additional

* *Place lucrative et nullement périlleuse, et la plus intéressante peut-être de la nouvelle magistrature.*'—*Réponses à Louvet, et à Brissot et Guadet*, pp. 8, 34.

chances which this new state of affairs might open to their ambition or cupidity. This revival of their hopes sufficiently accounts for the violence with which Robespierre and his friends urged the *déchéance* of the king in the Jacobins, in the Assembly, and even on the Champ de Mars? But the victory of that day defeated their efforts; the Monarchy was rescued; the revision and confirmation of the Constitution seemed to have restored matters to the same state as before the crisis, and Pétion, Buzot, and Robespierre—*les pauvres hommes*—had only to remain magistrates.

On the 1st of October, 1791, the Constituant Assembly closed, and the Legislative commenced their functions, and soon showed that instead of being—as the spirit of the Constitution promised, and as Robespierre, when he excluded himself from it, may have supposed—a mere deliberative council, it was as ambitious, aggressive, and unmanageable as the Constituant had been, and equally the real *officina* of business, the chief mart of popularity, and the widest arena for political struggle. It cannot be doubted that Robespierre had, from the moment that the king's flight had opened the prospects of a republic, discovered that he and his friends had made a great mistake in his choice of non-election, and had placed himself in a subordinate and humiliating position. He could not see without envy Brissot, hitherto so much his inferior in popular estimation, and Vergniaud, and Guadet—men utterly unknown—succeed to and eclipse the reputation that he had acquired in the Tribune of the Assembly. Nor could it be gratifying to his *amour propre* to see his friend and ally Pétion advanced, on the removal of Bailly, 17th Nov. 1791, to the office of mayor of Paris—at that time really the most prominent and important in the state—while not only was no notice taken of him, but Treilhard was appointed to succeed Pétion as President of the Tribunal, of which Robespierre was left still Public Accuser. It may be also worth observing, that, simultaneously with this nomination of Pétion, which attests the growing weight and influence of the Brissotins, we find the Rolands, who had retired to Burgundy on the nominal restoration of the King, returning to Paris in the middle of December, elate no doubt at the election of their friend Brissot into the new Assembly—anxious to support and not unwilling to profit by his growing influence.

From this period we may safely date that internecinal hostility between Robespierre and the whole Brissotin party (afterwards

called the Girondins) in the course of which more blood was shed and more atrocities committed, than even in the greater contest (of which it was an episode) between the Monarchy and the Republic.

From the spring of 1792 till the summer of 1793 the great Revolution was reduced to, not a struggle between despotism and liberty, nor even between Louis XVI. and Egalité, but into a miserable squabble between Brissot and Robespierre. In the interval of that remarkable period there is really nothing but a wrestling-match between these two men and their cliques.

Robespierre evidently thought, and, as far as we can judge, with some justice, that he was neglected, perhaps proscribed, by his old associates, who probably, with equal justice on their parts, thought him selfish, obstinate, and arrogant. These enemies were now in possession of the Tribune of the Assembly—a commanding position, whence Robespierre would have been soon overpowered if he had not found, or indeed created, a power less elevated but more formidable in the Jacobin Club, which, situated within a musket shot of the Legislative Chamber, had erected itself into an auxiliary legislature, where the same questions were discussed, and frequently with more weight on public opinion than in the Assembly itself. On the 5th of February, 1792—the day that the Criminal Tribunal was installed, and that Robespierre entered on his office of *Public Accuser*—he pronounced before the Club a speech containing his reasons for having accepted the office, the principles by which he meant to be guided, and his resolution to hold it no longer than he could reconcile it to the other and higher duties which he owed to the cause of liberty; meaning, obviously, as a writer and as a *Jacobin*.

There is, however, in this speech one passage, which, though it would seem a mere commonplace in another man's mouth, is remarkable in that of the creator, purveyor, and dictator of the *Revolutionary Tribunal*:—

'The safety and welfare of society is infinitely more compromised by the *judicial* murder of one innocent person than by the impunity of the worst criminal. Such shall be the first rule of my conduct.'—*Discours aux Jac.*, 5 Feb. 1792.

This address from a *magistrate* to a *club* is itself a proof that the club had already usurped the powers of the government; and

that a public officer, professing his devotion to the *Constitution*, should have adopted a course so utterly *unconstitutional*, shows the extent to which anarchy had already proceeded. We believe, however, that this speech had really no other object than a general homage to the Club, and a pledge of his future attachment; for we are satisfied that he had already abandoned the intention of retaining that inferior place. He saw that popularity and place, and, above all, a place which obliged him to execute the laws, were totally incompatible, and he hastened within three months to resign a post in which he did, and in fact, could have done, nothing; for though the Tribunal was constituted in February, it did not hold a sitting till April, after Robespierre's resignation. Treilhard, who succeeded Pétion as president, tells us in a note (*Pap.* iii. 277) that the interval being employed by the members of the Tribunal in preparing the business for the public session, Robespierre attended so irregularly that Treilhard reprimanded him. Robespierre smiled, retired, and came no more. We suspect that Treilhard must have exaggerated when he talked of reprimanding Robespierre—the most jealous and implacable of men, and at that time as powerful in the Jacobin Club and with the mob of Paris as he became soon after in the Convention and throughout France. If Treilhard had reprimanded, or in any degree offended Robespierre, we do not believe that he would have survived to boast of it.

But though now only a private citizen, his influence through the Jacobin Club was so great and so formidable to the Legislative Assembly, that on the 25th of April Brissot and Guadet—the two most influential members of the National Assembly—did not disdain to come to the Jacobin Club with a denunciation against Robespierre, who replied on the 27th in a set speech of considerable power, which was not merely crowned with the approbation of the society, but printed and distributed over the whole face of France. In this speech he states, more particularly than we have seen elsewhere, the services at the first electoral assemblies of Artois, which had procured his election to the States-General. He also, in answer to a sneering interrogatory of what he had done in the Constituant Assembly, replied, that this was, from such a quarter, a most ungrateful question, for that, at least, *he had*, 'by the decree of non-reëlection, *made Brissot and Condorcet legislators.*' 'But why,' he says, 'are these insulting questions asked me?

—even in this society *whose very existence is a monument of what I have done.* I defended it in times of difficulty and danger, when those who now come hither to insult me had abandoned it; and the very tribune from which they attack me is the evidence of my public service.' He then complains that, after charging him with *doing nothing*, they shift to a contradictory accusation of having *done too much*, and have invented the word AGITATOR, which they contumeliously apply to him for having endeavoured to excite public opinion against the intrigue and treason that impeded the revolution! — (*Réponse de M. Robespierre à MM. Brissot et Guadet, le 27 Avril*, 1792). Of the style and effect of these exhibitions we have on this occasion a remarkable instance, which we copy from the journal of the Club :—

'M. Robespierre ended his speech, which was very much applauded throughout, by this reflection upon himself:—"Perhaps in addressing you in this open way I shall draw upon myself the hatred of all factions. They will all feel that they can never accomplish their designs as long as there is among them one brave and honest man, who will be continually on the watch to defeat their designs, and who, despising life, dreads neither poison nor steel, and would be but too happy if his death could be useful to the liberty of his country." At these words the holy enthusiasm of virtue seized the whole Assembly, and each member swore, in the sacred name of liberty, to defend M. Robespierre even to the peril of his own life.'—*Mém. de Weber*, ii. 322.

We have dwelt a little on this speech, because it gives a fairer account of the main points of Robespierre's political life up to that period than we have found elsewhere; it proves that he could be no ordinary man who, in a private station, was an object of alarm to the supreme authority, and was powerful enough to meet and to defeat, single-handed, the most eloquent and influential of the rulers of the state. In one passage we have the first indication of the dreadful secret which Robespierre's present influence and future power indicated. *Blood and Terror* were the talismanic words of his new necromancy. He affects to invite the Brissotins to a reconciliation—he conjures them, if they are really the friends of the revolution, to bury in oblivion these internal disputes, and to unite against the common enemy. 'Hasten,' he says in quaint but terrible phraseology, 'to cause the *sword of the executioner to move horizontally*, so as to *strike off the heads of all the conspirators*

against liberty.' The guillotine soon changed the *direction* of the exterminating axe from the *horizontal* to the *perpendicular*, but the spirit of the apostrophe was the same, and reveals, as we shall soon more fully see, the mainspring of Robespierre's policy.

But he did not think it safe to depend solely on the effect of his oratory in the Jacobins; he saw that many of the most leading men of the new Assembly—such as Brissot, Condorcet, Louvet, Gorsas, Carra—had attained that eminence by publishing incendiary journals, and he too resolved to be a journalist. In the annals of audacity and dupery we know not a more remarkable instance than that Robespierre, the avowed enemy of the constitution, should call a journal devoted to the overthrow of that constitution by the title of '*The Defender of the Constitution.*'* Such flagrant impudence would appear miraculous if we had not recent examples in our own day and country that those who are endeavouring to overthrow all our institutions, profess, like Robespierre, to be the real *friends of the Constitution*. He himself was aware of this inconsistency, and endeavours in his first number to excuse it, by alleging that, though he had opposed and still disapproves many provisions of the Constitution, he was, now that it was the law, prepared to defend it against those whose Machiavellian policy had made it so defective only to afford a readier pretext for getting rid of it and the revolution together. Every line of the work shows that this was a flimsy pretence, and indeed a calumny against the Constitutionalists. But he had probably a deeper motive; his sagacity anticipated the policy that was afterwards employed so successfully against Charles X. † He saw that this paper Constitution was inexecutable in practice, and that neither the Brissotins nor any other ministry could confine itself between four corners, as the lawyers express it, of such an inconsistent formula. If the country was to be governed—if property and public order were to be maintained—in short, if any shadow of royal authority was to be preserved, the anarchical principles of the

* The proper title of the Club, popularly called the Jacobins, from its sitting in the church of that monastery, was the '*Society of the Friends of the Constitution.*' This name it assumed in the early days when the Revolution affected to ask no more than *a constitution*, and that the Royalists were supposed to resist one. The struggle had changed its nature, but the Club retained its name, and it was probably to attest his devotion to, and help his identification with, the Friends of the Constitution, that Robespierre adopted this most inappropriate title.

† See M. Thiers' system of attack on the Bourbons under cover of their own charter. p. 20.

Constitution must be evaded or violated: and he saw that it was a barrier strong enough to defeat assailants, but when they were routed, to be easily overleaped or destroyed by its former defenders.

We have no direct evidence of the precise date or immediate cause of the rupture between Robespierre and his Brissotin friends, nor as to when his friendship with the Rolands began to cool, but the acquaintance altogether was but short; it commenced, we have seen, in the spring of 1791, and we strongly suspect did not continue long after, if so long as, the appointment of Roland to the ministry in March, 1702. This extraordinary announcement of a subordinate functionary just relieved from a small office in a provincial town to the Ministry of the Interior of the kingdom of France, could hardly have happened, oven in such a chaotic revolution, but for Robespierre's self-denying ordinances, which, by excluding from the Ministry both the existing and the late Assemblies, enabled, perhaps obliged, Brissot and the Girondins (themselves incapacitated) to nominate Roland, whom they knew to be a man of good character, respectable abilities, some knowledge of commercial and statistical subjects, of their own politics, and above, as we suspect, all other merit, as the husband of his wife.*

Men of a more amiable temper than Robespierre might have been equally surprised and mortified at the results of the kind of political suicide that he had committed, and at seeing himself not only deserted as it were by his associate Pétion, but eclipsed by Brissot in the Assembly, and overtopped by the elevation of Roland to the Ministry, while he, a veteran as it were of the Revolution, was left to the barren, and by no means consolatory, reflexion of

'Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes.'

* Dr. Moore gives us the following sketch of the personal appearance of Roland and Danton:—'These two men,' he says, 'were often in opposition to each other, even when joined [after the 10th August] in the same administration, and differed in external appearance and manners as in all the rest. Roland is about sixty years of age, tall, thin, of a mild countenance and pale complexion. His dress every time I have seen him has been the same—a drab-coloured suit lined with green silk, his grey hair hanging loose. Danton is not so tall, but much broader. His form is coarse, and uncommonly robust. Roland's manner is unassuming and modest; that of Danton fierce and boisterous. He speaks with the voice of a stentor, declaims on the blessings of freedom with the arrogance of a giant, and invites to union and friendship with the frown of an enemy.'—ii. 252.

He certainly, of all men then on the scene, had contributed most to the development of the Revolution, and he alone, as far as we know, had not profited by it; and we do not doubt that the acrimonious hostility with which he pursued Dumouriez (then in effect First Minister) was owing to his having, in March, 1792, at the suggestion of Brissot, persuaded the King to the acceptance of Roland and his two friends, Servan and Clavière, into the Ministry. Nor, if he had condescended to complain of his own excluded position, he would not have been much pleased with being reminded that it was his own act. '*Vous l'avez voulu, Georges Dandin*,' is the very bitterest form of condolence.

There was also a minor point of these ministerial arrangements that was likely to have been very offensive to Robespierre, and of which the consequences appear to have been very important. Louvet tells us that *he* was named by Dumouriez and his new colleagues, and accepted by the King as *Minister of Justice*. He was, he says, for eight-and-forty hours in the enjoyment of this happy vision; but Robespierre had heard of the intention, interposed his veto, and picked a quarrel with Louvet at the Jacobins: the new ministry were afraid to persist in their nomination, and Louvet was excluded. Such is Louvet's statement; but we confess that if we wonder at Roland's nomination *per saltum* into so great an office, for which, however, he had some acknowledged qualifications, we cannot help entertaining some doubts that Louvet could have been proposed and accepted for the still higher and graver office of *Minister of Justice*. He was but thirty-two years old, and it seems doubtful whether he was even admitted *Advocate*. Certain it is that he never practised; and that he was only known to the public as the author of the licentious novel of *Faublas*. That he should have been for a moment thought of, and above all accepted by the King for the first legal office in the state, the head of the law, seems to us incredible; but he certainly was brought forward, and probably for some considerable office, by the *Rolands;* but whatever may have been the details of the affair, there can be no doubt that it was the cause of the personal animosity that Louvet exhibited against Robespierre, and that Robespierre retaliated on Louvet and the Girondins, whose instrument he was.

The *Défenseur*, which was in the shape of a *pamphlet* of thirty or forty pages, professed to be published weekly, but it seems to

have appeared irregularly. It has no dates, and is written in a style so diffuse and declamatory, and so void of facts, that there is little internal evidence as to the exact date of the several numbers. We know, however, that it commenced in May and closed at the 12th Number by the *Tenth of August*. Several passages, and the whole spirit of the publication, reveal the feelings of personal grievance and mortification with which he regarded his late associates. He accuses Brissot by name of the *scandalous ostentation with which he distributes public offices amongst his creatures;* and he especially designates, without however naming Roland, the *department of the Interior* (No. 3, i. 37): 'Is it not,' he asks, 'a manifest violation of the prohibitory decrees, that Brissot should fill by his private friends the places that he cannot hold himself? And where is the merit of resisting the King's Civil List when one has the purses of the Ministerial departments in your own hands?' And, again, in No. 4, 'They accuse us of ambition;—but compare their public life and ours: we have rejected fortune and power; we have shut against ourselves the door of those offices where our antagonists have placed their friends, which they themselves aspire to enjoy. *We* have denied ourselves seats in that Assembly where *they* traffic with the rights of the people; *we* have abandoned that *tribune* whence *they* calumniate us. They possess all—they aspire to all. *We* have renounced all—but the right of dying for our country.'

These extracts, and indeed every line of the 'Défenseur,' confirms us in our opinion, that nothing was farther from Robespierre's intention in the prohibitory decrees than any self-sacrifice; and that the neglect, which, on the sudden change of circumstances, he seems to have experienced from his former associates, exasperated his jealous and irritable temper into that sanguinary frenzy which immolated both foes and friends, and thousands on thousands that were neither; and finally, his faction and himself.

The *Défenseur*, though it rises now and then into powerful sarcasm, is, upon the whole, in comparison with the tone of the times, so moderate and didactic, we may almost say so dull, that we should doubt that it attained much popularity. We hear very little about it from his contemporaries; but it must have had some success, and at least fulfilled Robespierre's own expectations and objects, for we find that he resumed it after his election to the Convention, in September, 1792, under the title of *Letters to*

his Constituents, and continued it for nearly six months more, in which it was a little, and but a little, enlivened—in the first quarter by invectives against the King and clamours for his execution—and in the second, by similar denunciations against the Brissotins, the Queen, and citizen Egalité. It terminated at the 10th Number of the third quarter, about the end of March, 1793, when Robespierre became too deeply engaged in his mortal strife with the Girondins in the Convention to have leisure to continue this flat and unprofitable paper hostility.

Robespierre's conduct in relation to the attacks on the Tuileries on the 20th of June and the 10th August, 1792, are passed over slightly or in silence by the historians; and of the 20th of June at least, the little that we have been told is certainly erroneous. M. Thiers repeats, and seems inclined to adopt a statement that the latter movement was concerted at a meeting of Pétion, *Robespierre*, and Sillery at Santerre's house. It is certain that Pétion and Santerre, and very probable that the avowed Orleanist Sillery, were in that plot. It is true also that Danton, Camille Desmoulins (also Orleanists), and several Jacobins who were, perhaps even then, and certainly soon after, mortal enemies of the Girondins, were parties to this insurrection, in a hope either of crowning the Duke of Orleans, or at least of dethroning Louis. It is even probable that in the latter view Robespierre would not have been displeased at its success; but to imagine that he was an original designer, or even an accomplice, shows a strange ignorance not only of his personal position and feelings but of his public opinions spoken at the Jacobins and recorded in his own journal. There is indeed no point of his history more clear than that in the outrage of the 20th of June he could have had no share, for it was essentially a Brissotin movement, and for the object of forcing back into power Roland and the Brissotin ministry, with whom the King had lately been forced to break on the subject of the two decrees about the nonjuring clergy, and the formation of the army of 20,000 men. We might *à priori* have been pretty sure that Robespierre would have felt no anxiety about them, but we find in the 5th Number of the *Défenseur* that he not only opposed the proposition for the 20,000 men, but had in the Jacobin Club, on the 15th of June, on the dismissal of Roland, Servan, and Clavière, spoken of them by name with something more than indifference; and with a strong protestation against the attempts that were making

to instigate the people to insurrection, only for the selfish objects of individuals—'hypocrites of liberty;' nay, he points out the criminality and the danger of endeavouring 'to seduce the ardent but ill-informed multitude by the bait of a freer government and *by the name of a Republic*, which would be not merely the overthrow of the Constitution, but must at that juncture lead to a civil war, to anarchy, and to despotism.'

This sortie against popular insurrection from Robespierre would have been curious at any time, but is particularly so when we recollect how few weeks it was before the 10th of August, in which he strongly encouraged, if he did not originate, an insurrection exactly similar to that he now deprecated, and for the express object of overthrowing the Constitution, of which he was the *Défenseur*, and establishing that *Republic*, which, as he truly foretold, could lead only to anarchy and despotism. The clue to all these political variations is the consistency of his personal resentment against what he, no doubt, thought the ingratitude and treachery of his former accomplices.

But at the 10th of August the case was different. The 20th of June, though it had failed in its Brissotin object, succeeded in the more important one of reviving the example of the 5th and 6th of October, of familiarizing the people to the assault of the royal residence; and the indiscreet proceedings of Lafayette had united all the various revolutionary factions in violent and unanimous hostility against him and against the unfortunate Monarch who was now to suffer more from Lafayette's rash and impotent protection than he had formerly done from his triumphant vanity, ambition, and arrogance. Robespierre's hatred of Lafayette would, if he had had no other motive, have changed his opinion of the late insurrection; but he must also have seen in the state of the public mind the certainty of a new and more decisive commotion, and that it would avail neither his former principles nor his future interest, nor perhaps his present safety, to separate himself from the real sources of his power, the populace and the Jacobins. It was evident, too, that he could not expect to retain that power in the anomalous and isolated position in which he stood, and that it had become necessary to release himself from the prohibitory decrees and restore him to a seat in the National Assembly, or, at least, to the capability of political office. He, therefore, suddenly changed his tone about insurrections and a Republic, and joined, if

he did not originate, a new conspiracy for renewing the attempt of the 20th of June on a large scale, and for Jacobin instead of Brissotin objects. He was afterwards reproached with not having appeared to take a personal share in the danger of the conflict of the 10th of August, but he seems to have served the cause in the way most suitable to his character and his talents, by evoking, installing, and directing a rebel municipality at the Hôtel de Ville, which usurped the sovereign authority in the night of the 9th of August, for the purpose of insuring the success of the insurrection of the 10th August, which it effectually did. By this daring step Robespierre acquired a kind of *locus standi*. No one could foresee the exact course or shape that the revolution might take, and he prudently provided himself with a recognized position—a kind of magistracy. Whatever might be the ulterior course of events, the municipality of Paris was a power in the state with which he identified himself, and which he might be sure would carry him to whatever National Assembly should arise from the confusion. For in endeavouring to unravel Robespierre's policy we should never forget that, as it is very probable he had proposed the non-election of the Constituents, because he himself had no certainty, and perhaps indeed no chance, of re-election; so, now, he is likely to have calculated that his best chance of election to any future Assembly was by his influence over the populace of Paris. This difficulty about re-election is nowhere, that we have seen, noticed by the historians; but practically it was a most serious one, and had, as we shall see presently, tremendous results.

When the *Tenth of August* occurred, the Brissotins and Moderates were disposed in the first moments to abjure and reprobate it; when it had become, beyond all expectation, successful, and the fate of the monarchy was sealed, they hastened to adopt it, and it became, and to this hour remains, a matter of dispute between the two parties—which had the honour of founding the Republic by the events of that day.

That some of the conspirators of the 10th of August, such as Pétion, Barbaroux, Carra, &c., subsequently adhered to the Brissotins is very true; but the chief hands in the affair were the Cordeliers or Orleanists, Danton and Desmoulins, and the most influential head, we have no doubt, was Robespierre. But there is abundant evidence that the Girondins as a party had little or no share in it, though by happening to have at the moment the u[illegible]

jority in the Assembly, they reaped the immediate advantages; for on the suspension of the King, their 'creatures,' as Robespierre had a month before called Roland, Servan, and Clavière, were recalled to office, and, with the addition of two insignificant names, Monge and Lebrun, and the formidable superfetation of Danton, the real representative of the popular victory, formed the Provisional Government. Danton appointed as his under-secretaries Desmoulins and Fabre. Robespierre, still under the ban of his own prohibitory decree, was incapacitated from political office, and must have seen that this was now the crisis of his own fate as well as that of the monarchy. A Convention was to be elected to decide on the form of the future Government, and if Robespierre should not be elected into that Convention he would be completely and irretrievably ostracised, and probably as much forgotten as the thousand of his colleagues in the Constituant who sank into obscurity and oblivion after the dissolution of that first Assembly. Robespierre's personal difficulties on this vital point must have been very great, but he met them with corresponding resolution. In the closing number of the 'Défenseur,'—undated, but published within a few days after the 10th of August—after an inflamed account of the crimes of the Court and the magnanimity and grandeur of the people, he proceeds to advise them by what means on their parts 'the success of the Convention is to be *prepared* and ensured.' Subsequent events make the terms of this warning important.

'You must *prepare* the success of this Convention by the *regeneration* of the spirit of the people. Let all awake—all, all arise—all arm; and the enemies of liberty will hide themselves in darkness. Let the tocsin of Paris be re-echoed in all the departments. Let the people learn at once to reason and to fight. You are now at war with all your oppressors, and you will have no peace till you have punished them. Far be from you that pusillanimous weakness or that cowardly indulgence which the tyrants so long satiated with the blood of the people now invoke when their own hour is come! Impunity has produced all their crimes and your sufferings. Let them fall under the sword of the laws. Clemency towards them would be real barbarity—an outrage on injured humanity.'—*Déf.* No. 12, p. 583.

Before we reach the practical explanation of these ill-omened words, we must observe, that about this time some communication

was opened between Robespierre and the Girondins: we know no more of it than we gather from a single letter addressed to Robespierre by Madame Roland, dated the 25th August, from which we conjecture that she must have written a preceding letter, expressing a wish to see and converse with her old friend, of whose patriotism and devotion to the good of the public she was fully satisfied. Robespierre seems to have declined the interview, and to have hinted something as if she had encouraged certain '*intrigans*,' the mortal enemies of Robespierre. Madame Roland replies, that she did not know whom Robespierre could mean by *enemies* and *intrigans*, but that her object in wishing for the interview was, that

'persons of honest intentions, pure character, and zeal for the public good, apart from all personal views and from all hidden ambition, should come to a good understanding on the best means of serving the public.'—*Pap. Rob.* i. 305.

It is evident that the Girondins had now become aware of and alarmed at Robespierre's power, and had opened this negotiation for a reconciliation and coalition. It may have been suggested to them by the power that Robespierre had acquired in the Commune, and the influence which the Commune had begun to exercise over the Assembly; or it may have been specially prompted by the popular triumph which Robespierre received on the 17th August, when, on the same day that the Extraordinary—commonly called the Revolutionary—Tribunal, was created, he was nominated by the Electoral body of Paris to be its First President. This office he declined, to the dissatisfaction, as it seems, of some of his friends, for he thought it necessary to publish his reasons for doing so.—(*Moniteur*, 28th Aug. 1792.) The first was, that he had been for three years the antagonist and accuser, and even the personal enemy, of those for whose trial the tribunal was specially instituted, and that therefore he could not with decency be their judge. This was obviously a mere pretext; but it seems, as well as the menacing terms of the Défenseur just quoted, to confirm the suspicion that we have always entertained,* that this tribunal was originally clamoured for, and finally adopted, with a view to the trial of the King and Queen. We at least cannot conjecture to whom else could be alluded as Conspirators of the 10th of August

* See Essay on the Revolutionary Tribunals.

with whom he had been at enmity and in conflict ever since the beginning of the Revolution. His second reason had more of truth, that 'the Presidency of the Tribunal was incompatible with the character of Representative of the Commune of Paris, and that he chose rather to abide by the latter duty. But this was not the whole truth. The Presidency was equally incompatible with a seat in the Convention—the real object of his ambition, and he clung to the representation of the Commune of Paris because it was the most effective instrument for securing the election of himself and his followers; and (which was probably of hardly less importance, for he was sure of his own individual return for his old department) the exclusion from the metropolitan deputation of Brissot and his friends who there accompanied it. This was a bold attempt; for even in Paris he had no chance of success but through the more violent section of the Jacobins and the *Commune;* while he had against him the Royalists, the Constitutionalists, the Moderates, the richer classes, the great majority of the National Guards, and the whole weight of the Girondin party now in possession of the Government and of all the civil and military authority, save only the usurping Commune. We think it even very likely that a compromise of this contest for the representation of Paris may have been the first motive of Madame Roland's overtures.

But there were other prominent revolutionists in somewhat similar circumstances—Danton, Desmoulins, Marat, Fabre, Billaud, Collot, &c.: none of these men had belonged to either of the former Assemblies, nor had the slightest prospect of getting into the new one but for Paris, nor for Paris without some terrible exertion of popular violence. They were chiefly Orleanists. How far Robespierre may have been implicated with Orleans himself we have no indication beyond the common object of all the revolutionists—the dethroning Louis XVI.; but with Danton, the ostensible head of that faction, he had coalesced at least to bring about the 10th August, but probably from a much earlier stage of the Revolution. Their common interests in this great crisis of the Conventional Election brought them into still closer alliance, and they resolved to apply to this election the same potent engine of Terror which had been found so effective in the case of Reveillon,* and had decided the Paris elections to the first Assembly.

* See observations on both these elections, antè, pp. 51-4.

'Je t'ai accusé,' says Louvet to him, 'd'avoir tyrannisé l'Assemblée Electorale par l'effroi—le premier député ne peut être que le 3 ou 4 Septembre, c'est à dire, sous les auspices de vos massacres déjà commencés.'—*Lettre*, p. 22.

This was the true motive of the massacres of the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of September, which filled Paris with consternation and the world with horror, and the succeeding days saw elected, *without opposition* and at the dictation of Robespierre, the Deputation of Paris. We have not room to develop all the details which corroborate this explanation of the first cause of these massacres, which none of the historians seem to have thought of any more than they did in the Reveillon case, though they might have found several contemporary indications of the terrible truth. 'If it is asked,' says the author of the curious '*Histoire de l'Espionnage*,' 'what was the motive of this *orgie* of human blood? It was that the Convention might not have for members men whose probity and talents were feared, and to force Paris *à fournir les coquins dont on avait besoin*.' And Madame Roland too says, 'In the Deputation of Paris were seen the members of that famous *Comité de la Commune* which had *directed the massacres of September*.'

This contest in the Club and in the press became still more direct and important after the 10th of August, when the usurpation of the Municipal Government of Paris by Robespierre and his *commune*, and the accession of the Girondins to the ministerial government of the country, brought them into a conflict of authority. Gercy-Dupré, the editor of Brissot's journal, attacked the Municipality—the Municipality summoned him before them to answer for his libel. He refused, denied their authority, and petitioned the Convention against them. The Girondins supported Gercy-Dupré, and Guadet proposed and carried a decree which, after thanking the Commune for its services in the late revolution, dismissed it, and directed that a new municipality should, *within twenty-four hours*, be elected in its stead; and a further article ordered the executive government to see to its execution and to take care that the direction of the military force of Paris should be lodged in the Mayor alone. This would have been a *coup de grace* not only to Robespierre's present power in the commune but probably to the hopes that he was building on it, of his election to the Convention. How was he to meet this pressing difficulty? The law, such as it

was, was against him, the armed force was taken out of the hands of the Commune—a new body chosen under the sudden and adverse influence of the general Government was to be, *within twenty-four hours*, installed. The case seemed desperate—but Robespierre was equal to the emergency and met it with a desperate remedy. The decree was passed on the morning of the 30th August; on the 31st an insolent and menacing deputation from the Commune protest against it at the bar of the Assembly and plainly intimate that they should appeal to the people—the Assembly, evidently intimidated, admit the deputation to the *honour of the sitting*, as it does also a second deputation, headed by the President and Secretary of the municipality, who attend to explain and justify their proceedings against Gercy-Dupré: and we hear no more of this new election which was to take place *within the twenty-four hours*. Early on the next day, 1st September, the commune published an official proclamation to the people of Paris, signed by their president and secretary, but avowedly from the pen of Robespierre: though it does not venture to set the decree at positive defiance, it renews the protest made at the bar the day before, and again appeals to the people, into whose hands they willingly resign their power, and who *alone* have a right to decide this question. On the morning of the 2nd, this same commune, which, under the decree, should have ceased to exist forty-eight hours before, under the signatures of the same president and secretary, issues its celebrated proclamation, calling the people '*Aux armes—Aux armes*,' and ordering the instant closing of the barriers, with a series of other exaggerated and exasperating signals of a danger created by themselves. At 5 o'clock that same evening, the 2nd, began the massacres. They lasted till the 6th; and on the 7th Robespierre and Danton were returned for Paris.

Our information as to the proceedings of this electoral body is very scanty, but we have before us two very rare pamphlets by Pétion, and two replies by Robespierre (the last in Nos. 9 and 10 of the *Lettres à mes Commettans*), from which it appears that Pétion, then still mayor, was a candidate apparently in the same interest with Robespierre and Danton. There can be little doubt that the friendship between the two former had been on the wane since Petion's promotion to the mairie and his increasing intimacy with the Brissotins, with whom Robespierre was at open war. But

they were on this occasion on civil terms, and on the first day of the election they were to have dined together at the house of a common friend, but it appears that, on the first ballot (*tour de scrutin*) that morning, the name of Robespierre was alone returned. Robespierre in his letter to Pétion says:

'Every one saw the changes of your countenance when, in the progress of the ballot, another name seemed to have the advantage of yours. You were aware that it was the unanimous intention to have named you next day, but you left the Assembly abruptly, and never re-appeared. You would not even keep your dinner engagements; and you have at last confessed the true motive of your vexation, by saying (p. 22), "*Well then, to be candid with you, I did think that, if I was named at all, I was entitled to be first.*"'

Pétion's pretensions were by no means ill-founded; he was at that time not merely the first man in Paris by his office, but to all appearance, and beyond all comparison, the most popular. The walls of Paris were still covered with the inscription, '*Pétion, ou la Mort.*' The paint was hardly dry with which his name and public services and the affection of the people were written in gigantic letters on the face of the Palace of the Tuileries.

But this contest was not so much a competition of the two men, though it took that shape, as a struggle between two great parties. Robespierre was pretty sure of his election in Artois, and Pétion was perfectly so of his for Chartres—the real struggle was between the Jacobins and the Brissotins: the massacres had driven all other candidates from the field; and even of the Brissotins none perhaps could have ventured to offer himself but the popular Pétion; at all events he was their best man, and the choice of Robespierre before him determined the character of the whole election. We know that the Brissotins had put forward as their

* This letter to Pétion, in reply to Potion's attack on him at the time of Louvet's accusation, is a very important document as to the causes of the schism between Robespierre and the Girondins. It is moreover written with so much spirit, that we suspect Camille Desmoulins may have had a hand in it. [Since I made this guess I have found in Louvet a suggestion that some passages were by an abler hand. Thiers gives Pétion's speech as 'a most admirable and important document,' but does not even allude to Robespierre's much more able and interesting reply. It is to be found in the Appendix to Mr. Adolphus's 'History of the Revolution,' the best English work—indeed we may say the best work—on the subject.

second man Dr. Priestley,* and that by Robespierre's active interference he was rejected for *Marat*.

Two other circumstances about this election are now also known —the one is, that there was a violent dispute between Robespierre and a young fellow who had just started into notice as the secretary of the usurping Commune, but whose name soon became celebrated—Tallien. The cause of the dispute we are not told, but it is possible that the adventurous secretary wished to be one of the representatives of Paris, which Robespierre may not have been disposed to concede to the neophyte. Tallien was returned for the adjoining department of *Seine and Oise;* but here were probably sown the seeds of that deadly enmity which on the 9th Thermidor, just two years later, stimulated Tallien to the resistance that overthrew Robespierre. Out of these intrigues, struggles, and massacres, was produced that celebrated Deputation of Paris, 'damned to everlasting fame,' which, as it derived its power from blood and terror, perpetuated it by deluges of blood and a succession of terrors, of which the world has had no other example. It is worth while to preserve their names in the order of their election:

Robespierre.	Robert.
Danton.	Dessaulx.
Collot D'Herbois.	Freron.
Manuel.	Beauvais.
Billaud-Varennes.	Fabre d'Eglantine.
Camille Desmoulins.	Osselin.
Marat.	Robespierre, jun.
Lecointre.	David.
Legendre.	Boucher.
Raffron.	Laignelot.
Panis.	Thomas.
Serjeant.	Philippe Egalité.

Egalité was the last elected, and on the last day, and not without some internal opposition, which was propitiated by a pecuniary contribution on his part. It is but justice to this unhappy man to state what we have not seen noticed elsewhere, that this change of name was not so spontaneous, nor therefore so absurd and degrading, as it has been hitherto thought. It was forced on him by his

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* Priestley was a favourite Brissotin candidate; besides being proposed for Paris, he had actually a double return for the department de l'Orne and for that of Rhone and Loire.

position (itself a great crime), and perhaps by the instinct of self-preservation. We know not under what circumstances of hope or of fear he allowed himself to be proposed for the representation of Paris in the Convention—whether from some lingering delusion of ambition, or from the more natural suggestion that the Assembly would be the safest asylum from personal danger—or, most probably, from a combination of these motives. A candidate, however, he was—but under what name could he be elected? Titles were abolished—the nickname of *Capet* given to his family (and which was not theirs) was a mark of proscription. He was, *of necessity* obliged to look out for another, and we really know not that, in the then state of affairs, he could have selected one more appropriate and inoffensive than *Egalité*. The case was urgent. The decree authorizing the change was passed the 15th September, and he was *elected by that name* one or two days after.

Let us not be supposed to say, in the case either of Reveillon, or of the September massacres, that the actual executioners were aware of the object for which they were employed; by no means: such a disclosure, or even a suspicion of it, would have defeated the scheme; but in both cases advantage was taken of extraneous accidents; and while the chief *directors* of the sedition had the result of the *elections* alone or chiefly in view, the populace was excited and maddened by every stimulating falsehood on which the circumstances of the times afforded an pretence. Ifor very probable, too, that the events exceeded in extent and enormity is the calculations of some of their planners; but it is also probable that, though they may have exceeded the intention of the instigators in *one direction*, they fell short of it in *another*. Their strong reason to believe that in September it was intended to sacrifice some of the Girondin leaders. Brissot was certainly in danger; Roland, the minister of the interior, was saved mainly in his absence from home from a detachment sent to arrest—or to murder—him; and his death would no doubt have been the signal probably for the massacre of the whole party. Happier would it have been for them, both in their persons and reputation, if they had died, instead of basely living, as they did, to palliate these atrocities, and to fall within a few months, by the hands of assassins and executioners, after a variety of lingering deaths, the dishonoured victims of the same whom they had at first flattered and screened.

It is the fashion of late to extol the Girondin party, as

cularly Roland, and his *maîtresse femme;* but any one who will read impartially, and with a careful reference to *dates, their own* accounts of these transactions, must see that, during the *long preparation* for *the massacre*, and the height and fury of its execution, the minister and his colleagues exhibited the basest apathy, and that it was not till they found *themselves* in danger that they showed the slightest disapprobation of the atrocities which had been for several days in notorious preparation; nor was it till the *second* and *third* days, that they took those measures—not of repression, but of complaint—on the evidence of which their eulogists now deny their participation in this tremendous guilt. We find this fact concisely stated and proved in the *Histoire Parlementaire de la Révolution*, a *liberal* publication:—

'On the *third* of September, the police, by order of the Commune, proceeded to Brissot's residence, and seized and examined his papers. [Here follow copies of the original documents.]. It was even said that eight orders of arrest had been issued against the Girondins; but no proof of this appears beyond the affair of Brissot. Be this, however, as it may, this bold attempt *awoke the ministers of his* (Brissot's) *party; and Roland* (who on the *evening of the 3rd* had written to the Convention) *wrote on the 4th a pressing letter to Santerre*,' &c.—*Hist. Parl.*, vol. xvii. p. 430.

The massacres, then, had been going on for twenty-four hours before Roland so much as complained; and it was not till the 4th that he applied to the commander of the military force—which never came.

We are satisfied that the Gironde had little active share in the *Tenth of August*,* and none at all in the massacres of September; but it cannot be denied that they were guilty of exciting the frenzy which rendered these crimes possible. How can Vergniaud—a Roman, a lawyer, a man of sense and shrewdness—be acquitted

* 'Who,' asks a member on the 26th of December, 1792, 'who is it that complains of being called one of the conspirators of the *holy* tenth of August? I am a conspirator!' Gualet said, on the 12th of April, 1793, 'the measures that overthrew the throne—the tenth of August—are *our* work.' See also Roland's proclamation. 'Hist. de l'Espion. ii. 59; see also Madame Roland, ii. 270, who claims for her party the tenth of August, though she repudiates September; so also does Brissot. Mem. iv. 387. The truth is that they did not *make* the tenth of August, though they countenanced and approved and *adopted*, when they began to profit by the insurrection. It was made by the *Jacobins* distinctively so called. On the 25th of July Brissot had denounced *death* against any one who should attempt to establish a Republic, *ib.* 387.

of having encouraged—nay, of having suggested—the massacres, when on the Sunday morning, *a few hours before the massacres had commenced, and two days after it was universally known that they were intended*, he addressed a deputation of the bloodthirsty *Commune* in these words—'*Parisians! it is to-day that you must display a great energy!*' Within *four* hours this very *Commune*, thus instigated to *energy*, began the massacres.

The Indian savage believes that he inherits the virtues of all the enemies he slays: Robespierre, on the same principle is loaded with all the crimes of the monsters whom he survived; and accordingly, M. Thiers and that class of historians not only palliate, but applaud the conduct of Roland and Pétion—while we confess that we look upon them as only meaner and more hypocritical villains—quite as guilty, quite as bloody, but only more contemptible—than the Marats, the Dantons, and the Robespierres.

Indeed, of all the actors in the whole tragedy of the revolution, there are none whom we regard with so much scorn as the selfish, cruel, cowardly, and imbecile faction of the Gironde, who, if they had had anything like honour, consistency, and courage, might and would have saved their country and themselves from the massacres of September, the murder of the king, and their own subsequent proscription of the 31st of May. They never exhibited any energy but against the vanquished — nor any touch of humanity till they themselves were in danger. Against such a timid flock of praters and intriguers, weathercocks and trimmers, who were base enough to arrogate the merit of crimes which they had not committed, and who skulked and cowered under the storm they had raised, it is not surprising that the insane audacity of Marat, the ferocious energy of Danton, and the cold-blooded calculation and inflexible consistency of Robespierre, should have prevailed. These last have earned the abhorrence of mankind; as to the former, an almost equal abhorrence is only mitigated by contempt. If any reader thinks we deal too severely by this celebrated Gironde, we would ask them only to read, even in the most partial history, the account of their miserable manœuvres on the trial of the king, and their dastardly indecision in the crisis of their own fate on the 31st of May and the 2nd of June, 1793. We must add one trait, which is eulogised by all their admirers—which M. Thiers calls '*sublime*,—but which, in our judgment, exhibits

nothing but childish bravado and disgusting levity. Twenty-one of them, after an imprisonment of four or five months, were sent (on the 31st October, 1793) to the scaffold, and they spent the night preceding their death—how?—in the festivities of a supper, enlivened with patriotic and bacchanal songs; and they solaced their passage next morning to the place of execution—by singing the *Marseillaise* in chorus. Imagine one-and-twenty *senators*—the conscript *fathers* of the republic—condemned by a most iniquitous sentence (for such it was as regarded the offences with which they were charged), and leaving their families, their friends, and their country in a bloody anarchy which they had helped to create—imagine, we say, such men going to execution—not penitent for their individual errors, nor for the public mischiefs to which they had contributed—not even grave at the dismal prospects of their country, nor impressed with any sense of that future world on the verge of which they stood, but—*singing*—singing in the condemned cell—singing in the executioner's cart! When we read, in flowery declamations, of 'the majestic wisdom and the exalted eloquence' of Vergniaud and his colleagues, we are involuntarily reminded of this their last hoarse and hollow *song*, broken by the rattle of the wretched tumbril which jolted them to execution. Oh bloody farce!—Oh impious buffoonery! Oh what a contrast to the last hours of the *Son of St. Louis*—of the heroic Queen—of the angelic Elizabeth, and of the host of Christian martyrs immolated on the same scaffold!*

It is not to be doubted that Robespierre, though not the most prominent accuser of the Girondins—that task was deferred to Danton, Marat, and Chabot—was their most effective enemy. Brissot in his defence more than once alludes to Robespierre as the individual prosecutor.—(*Mém.* iv. 391.) The feud between them and Robespierre had long been deadly, and was envenomed by their having once been *close allies;* and even one of his accusers (Barbaroux) expatiated on how much they had '*all loved him.*' We have already stated our conjecture of the causes of the change. The cold and repulsive manners of Robespierre, his haughty reserve and isolated ambition, gave umbrage to the gay,

* Mercier relates, with indignant sorrow, that two young women, executed for murder, went to death singing libertine songs. He adds: 'Charlotte Corday went to death smiling, but she did not *sing*.' (*N. T.*, 251.) He had forgotten his friends the Girondins.

familiar, and gregarious, though not less ambitious Girondins; while their accession to fame and power must have inflamed his characteristic jealousy and envy. Brissot himself says—

'Robespierre, ardent, jealous, thirsting for popularity, envious of the successes of others, inclined to rule by disposition and by prejudice in his favour, became chief of the Opposition at the declaration of war. Robespierre never forgave Brissot that triumph,' &c. &c. —*Mém.*, p. 275.

But whatever may have been the *secret* course of this enmity, it must be admitted that in public, at least, the Girondins were the aggressors. Their attacks on Robespierre have—since the general odium with which his subsequent atrocities have covered his very name—been highly eulogised, but *at the time* they were made he was no more guilty than themselves—their enmity was provoked by no better motive than personal rivalry; and, in pursuing *chronologically* the course of causes and effects, it seems probable that the hostilities of the Girondins drove Robespierre in his own defence into the extreme measures by which he outbid them in the auction of popularity and power. We have already seen that Brissot and Guadet formally attacked him in the Jacobins. They accused him of monopolizing popularity, of aiming at the exclusive reputation of patriotism, and finally and ridiculously proposed that this dangerous citizen should by some kind of ostracism * be sent into exile. On the other hand, the *Commune* of Paris was filled by Robespierre's adherents, and it may be suspected that it was not without his connivance at least that they ventured to take measures against the liberty of Brissot and the life of Roland.

Under this exasperation of mutual injuries, the parties met in a new field of battle—the National Convention—and on its very first assembly, the 21st of September, 1792, arrayed themselves in avowed hostility—Brissot and the Girondins replacing the *Côté Droit*, while Robespierre with the deputation of Paris, and all the ultra-Jacobins, clustered on the highest back benches to the President's left, then first called the *Mountain*.

A mortal strife now began; and the fate of the King was the first great object of solicitude with both parties—not for *his* sake, but *their own*. The Girondins had suspended him—the Mountain,

* Discours de M. Guadet aux Jacobins, 25 Avril, 1792; and Réponse de M. Robespierre le 27, p. 12.

according to the inevitable laws of faction (as certain as those of nature—indeed they are the same), *outbid* them by urging his immediate deposition; and when the Girondins acquiesced in the *déchéance*, the Mountain again outran them by proposing his *execution*. The Girondins foresaw that, if their adversaries obtained this victory, they themselves were lost; and their great anxiety now was how to play their selfish and unprincipled game in the mode least dangerous to their popularity and power. Acquit him they dare not; and, on the other hand, they were averse to his death—partly, we hope, from some lingering sense of humanity and justice, but partly also as the triumph of their own mortal antagonists; they halted between two opinions, and fell into a course of half measures which, as usual, ruined their projectors. They seem to have hoped to anticipate and elude this difficulty by an early attack on the Mountain. If they should be able to depopularise and defeat it, *on other grounds*, before the King's trial—they might, they hoped, be relieved from the embarrassments in which that proceeding could not fail to involve them. The Roman history had been employed by the Republican writers as the text-book of the Revolution. All kings were Tarquins and Neros—every patriot a Brutus, Cato, and Cicero—and the leader of each defeated faction became in turn Sylla, Clodius, and Catiline. The Girondins now endeavoured to avail themselves of these pedantic and inapplicable precedents. Nothing in Roman history was so odious as the *Triumvirate*,—nothing more dangerous to liberty than a *Dictator*,—and accordingly they accused Danton, Marat, and Robespierre of intending to establish a *Triumvirate*, and, with no great consistency, Robespierre, individually, of aiming at the *Dictatorship*; on no other grounds, as is admitted,* than some vague phrases, in which Marat and other supposed friends of Robespierre expressed the opinion—which more sober-minded men must have entertained—that out of the anarchy in

* Thiers, a stanch advocate for the Gironde, admits of Robespierre's defence against Louvet's charge, that 'tout ce qui lui était personnel était *juste*. Il y avait de l'impudence de la part des Girondins à signaler un projet *d'usurpation* là où il n'y avait *encore* qu'une *ambition d'influence*. Robespierre n'était encore qu'un *jaloux*.'—Thiers, tom. ii. p. 157-98. "Only a *jaloux*." What! can an historian who has or ought to have read the history of the Commune of Paris from the 10th of August to the election of the Convention, talk so lightly of Robespierre's share in the measures of the *Commune* and of the electoral body!

which they were involved there could be no escape but by a concentration of power in fewer hands.

As early as the 25th of September, 1792, these charges were publicly made by Vergniaud and others in eloquent declamations, and by Barbaroux and Rebecqui with the allegation of particular facts. Robespierre—whether from caution or want of readiness—*never* seems to have been very forward or very explicit in his own defence; but Danton rushed to the tribune and exculpated himself and his friend with his usual audacity and effect. Robespierre then made a long and inconclusive protestation of his patriotism, which was not much to the purpose, and certainly appeared rather to evade than deny the imputation. Then, *for the first time*, Marat rose to address the assembly. The majority—for such the Girondins and moderates incontestably were in the first months of the Convocation—affected surprise and horror at seeing this libeller, this avowed advocate of blood and anarchy, in the new character of a legislative orator, and attempted to hoot him down. 'I perceive,' said he, 'that I have enemies here.'—'*All, all*, all are your enemies!' vociferated the almost unanimous assembly—that self-same assembly which, three months after, erected his image in their hall, and inscribed his name in their Pantheon, with nothing short of *divine honours*. They attempted, we say, to hoot down the future god of their idolatry—but he boldly persisted:—

'They talk of triumvirates and dictatorships, and attribute these designs to the metropolitan members. Well, I owe it to justice to declare that my colleagues, and especially Danton and Robespierre, have always opposed the opinions which I avow on this point; I, first and alone, of all public writers in France, have thought of a Dictatorship as the only means to crush (*écraser*) the anti-revolutionary traitors. If this be punishable, punish me, and me alone—but *first hear me*.'—*Moniteur*, 27th Sept. 1792.

And they were obliged to hear him repeat in that place, not merely the doctrine of the *Dictatorship*, but those extravagant instigations to wholesale murder, for which his journal was so infamously notorious.

Vergniaud made an eloquent and indignant reply, in which he cited a phrase of Marat's journal of that very day, which (though not exactly within our present scope) we too shall quote as a striking proof of Marat's boldness, sagacity, and *foresight*:—

'Seeing the temper of the majority of this Convention, I own that I despair of the public safety,—if in our first eight sittings we shall not be able to lay the foundation of our constitution, there is nothing to be hoped from us. *Fifty years of anarchy await you*, and you will emerge from it only by the power of *some dictator* who will arise—a true statesman and patriot. *O prating people, if you did but know how to act!*'—*Ibid.*

After a long and furious debate, the Convention, on the motion of Robespierre's friends, passed to the 'order of the day,' which, under the circumstances, was equivalent to a victory. On the 29th October, however, another scene of the same kind, but more solemn and important, was acted: Roland made a report against the *agitators* in general,—Robespierre, always sufficiently ready to reply to general accusations, answered him with boldness, but happening to say, *Who dares accuse me?* Louvet (the licentious novelist) electrified the assembly by answering, *I do*—and proceeded to develope his accusation. The majority loudly encouraged Louvet—Danton urged Robespierre to reply *instanter*, and on his hesitating he again took the lead. The same topics were renewed by nearly the same speakers, and the affair was suspended by Robespierre's obtaining an adjournment of a week to prepare his answer. We cannot, from any information we possess, determine whether this habitual reluctance of Robespierre to answer on the moment—which was obvious on all these important occasions, as well as on his last final struggle—arose from incapacity or from prudence. On many minor occasions he seems to have been superabundantly ready and fluent, and it is admitted that he had at last attained a considerable ease of *improvisation*. We suspect that both these causes operated—that he was personally *timid* as well as cautious, and that he was never able '*to screw his courage to the sticking place*' till he had maturely considered and prepared the course which it might be expedient to adopt.

The heads of Louvet's accusation are remarkable, as showing what were *at this time* the crimes imputable to Robespierre:—

'I accuse you, Robespierre,' says Louvet, 'of having long calumniated the purest patriots, and particularly in the days of September, when such calumnies were really proscriptions. I accuse you of having produced yourself as an object of *popular idolatry*, and of having caused it to be rumoured that you are the only man capable of saving the country. I accuse you of having degraded, insulted,

and persecuted the National Representation,—of having *tyrannized by intrigue and fear over the Electoral Assembly of Paris*, and of having aimed at supreme power by calumny, violence, and terror; and I demand that a Committee be appointed to examine your conduct.'—*Moniteur*, Oct. 31.*

Here we see is no allegation of *facts* (unless the vague hint about the *elections* may be so called), and but a very loose imputation of bad *motives* and ulterior *designs;* and it must always be recollected that this accusation was directed against a private citizen who held no office, who had no part in the administration of affairs, who did not even belong to any of the executive councils or committees, and to whom his 'popularity' and the foolish 'idolatry of the public' are objected as crimes against the state. Such accusations would have been topics fit enough for an invective harangue; but as grounds for a formal criminal charge they were ridiculous; and accordingly, when Robespierre made his defence on the 5th of November, he obtained a triumph similar to, but much more important in its consequences, than that of the 25th of September.

It is but justice,—for even the devil should have his due,—to observe, that if the Girondins had been successful, Robespierre must have been sent to the scaffold; and if Robespierre afterwards contributed to send them thither, it is clear that he only served them as, if he had not done so, they would have served him:—it was a fight for life between a wolf and a tiger.

The Girondins all along affected to confound Marat with Robespierre,—at this copartnership Robespierre's pride and prudence were equally offended. In his defence he repudiated all responsibility or share in Marat's election,† or any concurrence in his opinions, and he even asserted that he had never seen him *but once* (in private, of course, he must have meant), when, 'in a visit which Marat paid him, he took occasion to remonstrate with him on the violence of his writings, which many good patriots regretted.' But this disclaimer did not satisfy his jealousy. The Jacobin Club was instigated to complain of the affectation with

* See the same *Moniteur* for Roland's attack on Robespierre.

† This assertion, which was in some degree true, is not inconsistent with Robespierre's general influence in the choice of the metropolitan members. The Cordeliers proposed Marat, and he was elected — assuredly not without Robespierre's consent, but without his open interference, as he was more especially Danton's man.

which some persons identified *Marat* and *Robespierre*, and came to a formal resolution (23rd Dec. 1792), promulgated to all their affiliated societies, in which they warned all true patriots not to confound these two names; they acknowledged Marat's services in his own peculiar line, but they recorded a higher degree of confidence and respect for the more prudent patriotism, the more statesmanlike views, and the higher abilities of Robespierre.

The attempt of the *Girondins* to defeat the *Mountain* in this preliminary fight having thus failed, they were obliged to meet the crisis of the King's trial on its own ground. Their difficulties were, in themselves, great—their dishonesty and indecision rendered them fatal. They did not choose to risk their popularity by the plain and conscientious course of acquitting the King, either on the broad ground of his innocence (of which not one of them had or could have any doubt), or even on the more technical plea of his constitutional inviolability; but resolved on the base, and foolish, and—to them as to him—*fatal* expedient of voting him guilty, which was done without one dissentient voice, and of *compounding* with their honour and consciences by inflicting a punishment short of death.

But even this miserable device they had not courage nor consistency to execute: some of those most notoriously desirous of saving the King cowered under the menaces of the Mountain and the galleries in the most abject terror, and voted for death.

Mercier, who was almost a Girondin, tells us,

'the Girondins wished to save the King, but they did not wish to lose their popularity; and the despotism of the mob being then omnipotent, it was who should caress it most.'

M. Thiers, too, whose evidence when it makes against the Girondins has almost the weight of a *confession*, says, that

'many of the deputies who had come down with an intention of voting for the King were frightened at the fury of the people; and though much touched at the fate of Louis XVI., they were terrified at the consequences of an acquittal. This fear was greatly increased at the sight of the Assembly, and of the scene it presented. That scene, dark and terrible, had shaken the hearts of all, and changed the resolution of Lecointre de Versailles, whose personal bravery cannot be doubted, and who had not ceased to return to the galleries the menacing gestures with which they were intimidating the Assembly—even he, when it came to the point, hesitated, and dropped from

his mouth the terrible and unexpected word "*death.*" Vergniaud, who had appeared most deeply touched at the fate of the King, and who had declared that "nothing could ever induce him to condemn that unhappy prince—Vergniaud, at the sight of that tumultuous scene, pronounced the sentence of DEATH."'

We do not doubt that the Assembly did exhibit a most strange and awful appearance towards the close of that long and disorderly sitting, that the galleries were audacious and the deputies pusillanimous to a disgraceful degree; but personal danger, still more imminent, would have been but an abject excuse for such conduct as that of the regicide section of the Girondins. There are not wanting in the history of the Revolution instances of men less distinguished and in less responsible positions than Vergniaud, who preferred death to dishonour. But without pushing the argument to that extremity, we must observe that about 288 deputies were not afraid to take the honest course, which the Girondins so shamefully abandoned.

But, moreover, it seems that M. Thiers has somewhat exaggerated the degree of intimidation that the aspect of the assembly might reasonably create: at least Mercier, an eye-witness and actor, describes a scene less formidable but more shocking. Mercier was a light-headed man, and a good deal of a caricaturist, on whose judgment or inferences we place little reliance; but we cannot discredit his statement of facts, in which he bore a personal share, published while three-fourths of his fellow actors were still living, and the events were still glowing in the memory and the feelings of the public. The picture is so curious a one, that our sketches of Revolutionary History would be additionally imperfect without it.

After stating how much of exaggeration and deception there is in the narratives of the events of the Revolution, he instances

'the famous sitting which decided the fate of Louis XVI., and lasted for seventy-two hours. One would naturally suppose that the Assembly was a scene of meditation, silence, and a sort of religious terror. Not at all: the end of the hall was transformed into a kind of opera-box, where ladies in charming negligés were eating ices and oranges, drinking liqueurs, and receiving the compliments and salutations of goers and comers. The huissiers on the side of the *Mountain* acted the part of the openers of the opera-boxes; they were employed every instant in turning the key in the doors of the side

galleries, and gallantly escorting the mistresses of the Duke of Orleans, caparisoned with three-coloured ribbons.

'Although every mark of applause or disapprobation was forbidden, nevertheless, on the side of the *Mountain*, the Duchess Dowager,* the Amazon of the Jacobin bands, made long "Ha-ha's!" when she heard the word "death" strongly twang in her ears.

'The lofty galleries, destined for the people during the days which preceded this famous trial, were never empty of strangers and people of every class, who drank wine and brandy as if it had been a tavern. Bets were open at all the neighbouring coffee-houses.

'Listlessness, impatience, and fatigue were marked on almost every countenance: each deputy mounted the tribune in his turn, and every one was asking when his turn came. Some deputy came, I know not who, sick, and in his morning-gown and night-cap. This phantom caused a good deal of diversion in the Assembly. The countenances of those who went to the tribune, rendered more funereal from the pale gleams of the lights, and who in a slow and sepulchral voice pronounced only the word "Death!"—all these physiognomies which succeeded one another, their tones, their different keys: D'Orleans hissed and groaned when he voted the death of his relation; some calculating if they should have time to dine before they gave their vote; whilst women with pins were pricking cards in order to count the voices; deputies who fell asleep, and whom they were forced to awaken in order to vote; Manuel the secretary sliding away a few votes in order to save the unhappy King, and on the point of being put to death in the corridors as a punishment for his infidelity. These scenes can never be described as they passed; it is impossible to figure what they were, nor will history be able to reach them.'—*Mercier's New Picture of Paris*, pp. 230-31.

But there was another class of voters, including many of the minor Girondins, who accompanied their votes of *death* with conditions by which they meant no doubt to avert that extremity; but even in this they acted with a clumsy inconsistency and want of concert, which defeated their object: they voted for *death* with a variety of limitations and conditions which complicated the transaction, perplexed and intimidated the moderate members, and enabled (as it was said and is believed) the scrutineers to falsify the ballot, so as to carry the vote for death by a majority of ONE.

* Madame de Montesson, the second wife by a left-hand marriage of the last duke, the father of Egalité. *Her* appearance in this place, on this occasion, is one of those petty enigmas of the Revolutionary epoch which we cannot explain.

It was in allusion to these absurd and puzzling conditions that Sièyes is reported to have given his vote in the emphatic form of '*La mort—sans phrase!*'

The varieties of opinion and general confusion of the Convention during that tumultuous and terrible night rendered it very difficult to ascertain the exact number of the votes and proportionably easy to the dominant party, in whose hands the scrutiny was, to give—as they were accused of doing—a fraudulent turn to a balance so nearly equal. At the close of the scrutiny, in the night of the 17th of January, Vergniaud, the President, who, with the whole Gironde, and nearly all the Girondins, had voted for death, announced that the number of voters had been 721, of which the majority would of course be 361, and that 365 had voted for death absolutely. But next day another president, Barrère, announced that a revision of the scrutiny had reduced the number of absolute votes for death to 361, being the bare majority necessary. Even this result has been questioned. Some writers on re-examination of the *appel nominal* find a majority for the King, others a majority of 3 or 4 against him. On the whole, we incline to believe that there was a real majority of 1 for death unconditionally, 64 for death conditionally: 288 voted for prison or banishment, while not one dared to acquit him,* the best and the boldest venturing only to decline to vote. 'It is impossible,' says Mercier (§ 220) apologetically, 'to describe the agitation, even to madness, of that long and convulsive sitting.'

But it is not with their pusillanimous conduct in these last terrible sittings that we reproach the unhappy Girondins, so much as the preceding intrigues and cowardice which placed them in so dreadful an alternative that perhaps they could not, in that fatal struggle, have saved the King's life but at the expense of their own. Moralists, and even politicians, sitting in their quiet closets, may feel, or at least say, that one should die rather than be guilty of the death of the innocent; and some of these men, no doubt, would *individually* have done so, who yet suffered themselves to be carried away by the torrent of numbers and of terror. A *body* of men may be led to do what no single villain would dare,—*defendit numerus*,—each honed that the courage of others might compensate his own weakness, and the Convention exhibited on

* See Summary of the Procès Verbal, Procès des Bourbons, vol. ii. p. 126.

that night such a frightful mixture of enthusiasm on one side and desperation on the other,—such a *moral earthquake*, that, considering the base infirmities of human nature, we are not so much surprised that many men (otherwise respectable and just) lost their balance and fell in the general prostration and ruin.* We say this not to extenuate villany and cowardice, but to warn our own country against the enormities of which a mere popular Assembly may be guilty, and against the incalculable danger of committing supreme power to any ONE *body* of men, who, however individually respectable, honest, or honourable, are liable to become, *in combination*, the *most shameless and the most bloody of tyrants.*

In the whole of this awful struggle, the dark and cautious Robespierre seemed to rise with the circumstances — forward, zealous, and consistent—and, it must be admitted, no more guilty than the enlightened and good-natured Vergniaud—in conscience, much less so—for Robespierre *may* have been sincere, and Vergniaud certainly was not, when they *concurred* in voting the *death* of the King. But, be that as it may, verily they had each their ultimate reward—measured and proportioned, as it almost seems, to the degrees of their guilt.

The speeches of Robespierre on this melancholy occasion were considered his best oratorical exhibitions; and it must be confessed that he alone seems to have taken anything like an intelligible view of the proceeding. While others were giving the process the hypocritical *forms* of a *trial*, and affecting to debate *legal* questions as before an ordinary tribunal, Robespierre had the sense to see that such pretexts were idle, and that the *innocent* King could never be condemned even by the perversion of *law*: he, therefore, took the broader and less dishonest ground of confessing that 'the death of the King was not a question of law, but of *state policy*, which, without quibbling about his guilt or innocence, *required his death*;—the life of one man—if ever so innocent—must be sacrificed to preserve those of millions.' This detestable doctrine—less detestable, however, than the hypocrisy

* '*Nous votons*,' said Lanjuinais, the bravest and honestest man that the Revolution produced, '*sous le poignard et les canons des factieux*.' Lanjuinais was proscribed with the Girondins, but escaped, and survived to exhibit the independent moderation of his character through all the phases of the Revolution, even down to the Restoration.

which pretended to legality—was announced in more naked atrocity, and even put into the form of a substantive motion by his brother, Augustine, who, after complaining of the undue and scandalous scruples which the Convention seemed to entertain about doing justice on the most guilty—*du plus scélérat*—of men, proposed to decree at once—

'The National Convention, considering that Louis, late King of the French, has been condemned (*jugé*) by the Nation, that the representatives of the People would betray their own duty and invade the rights of the People if they were to attempt to question its sovereignty, decrees

'*That Louis Capet shall be brought to the bar to declare his original accomplices; to hear sentence of death pronounced upon him, and to be forthwith conducted to execution.*' *

A considerable tumult occurred at this stage of the debate, but it does not appear whether this extravagant proposition was actually put, or whether, as is most likely, it was smothered in the general confusion. We think it worth notice, as containing the essence of the elder Robespierre's argument and the true exposition of the motives of the whole Jacobin party, who had avowed their intention of executing the King long before he was tried, and who had all along boldly employed the words *trial* and *condemnation* as synonymous and identical.

That crime was hardly consummated when the murderers resumed their internecinal hostilities. Indeed, on the very night of the King's condemnation the Girondins made an attempt to turn it to profit against the Jacobins. 'We have but half done our duty,' cried Gensonné, one of the most sober of his party, 'in punishing the tyrant, if we do not punish the authors of the massacres.' Gensonné may perhaps have made this proposition in the hopes of saving Louis; but such an expedient—a comparison between the King and the *massacreurs*—so false—so odious—revolted common sense and common honesty; and the attempt, however intended, failed miserably, as attempted compromises between fear and falsehood on one side, and consistency and audacity on the other, never fail to do. The King expiated his

* Neither the speech nor motion are in the *Moniteur*, but they were printed separately by order of the Convention. The date is not given, but it must have been on the 10th December, when the *Moniteur* states that several members, and Robespierre junior amongst them, opposed the allowing counsel to the King.

virtues on the scaffold, and when he was removed, the Girondins found that there was no longer any screen between them and Robespierre—that is, between them and the scaffold. The death of the King had at once blooded the hell-hounds of democracy and deprived them of their prey—they were easily harked-on upon the Gironde. A series of tumults succeeded, all directed against this party, which had still the majority—but an intimidated and time-serving majority—of the Convention. On all these occasions Robespierre took care to appear not as an instigator, and still less as an actor, but in the prudent character of the senatorial advocate of his more active associates. On the 10th of March, 1793, the Mountain, backed by mobs, obtained a considerable advantage over their opponents, and carried the establishment of the accursed *Revolutionary Tribunal.** Early in April, the defection of General Dumouriez, who was, in the eye of the public, a Girondin, accelerated a fall which was already certain. On the 10th of April, Robespierre, in a speech of considerable ability, connected this event with the political movements of the Girondins. Vergniaud and Guadet replied with so much force, and retorted the charge so powerfully on the Jacobins, that taking advantage of an indiscretion of Marat's in the debate, they carried a decree of accusation and arrest against him†—a great folly and fatal success. The *Sections* of Paris, with the mayor at their head, retaliated on the Convention by petitioning it to expel *twenty-two* of the leading Girondins from their body. On the presentation of this petition (15th April), another incident occurred, eminently characteristic of popular assemblies. Boyer-Fonfrède, a young Girondin, who happened not to have been comprised in the *Twenty-two*, hastened to the tribune, and desired to be included in the accusation against his friends. The great majority of the Assembly, excited by this magnanimity, started up and exclaimed—'Include us *all—all—all!*' and grouped themselves about the *Twenty-two*, with every demonstration of attachment and devotion; and yet this very same Assembly a few weeks after adopted the prayer of this very petition, and sent the *Twenty-two* to prison—and eventually to death!

* See the Essay on the Revolutionary Tribunals.

† *Divisions* soon became so rare in the subservient Convention, that it is worth while to preserve the numbers on this occasion: of 367 members, 220 voted against Marat, 92 for him 7 voted for an adjournment, and 48 refused to vote.

The disorders became now more complicated—the Tribunal acquitted Marat—the *Sections* of Paris impeached the majority of the Convention. It was to one of these factious deputations, 11th May, 1793, that Isnard, the Girondin president of the Convention, made the celebrated but foolish and braggadocio reply :—

'If ever the Convention were insulted (*interruption*)—if ever by one of those insurrections which since the 10th March have been so unceasingly repeated (*violent interruption*)—if by these incessant insurrections—any attack should be made on the national representatives, I tell you, in the name of all France (*loud negatives*)—I tell you, I repeat, in the name of all France, that Paris would be annihilated (*general tumult*)—the traveller will *seek along the shores of the Seine whether Paris had ever existed.*'—*Mon., loco.**

This rhodomontade—so characteristic of the Girondins—was, as to the purpose for which it was uttered, a mere *brutum fulmen*—but not so in its effect on those to whom it was addressed—it ignited the train—the insurrection of the 31st March followed, and the impotent Girondins were scattered far and wide by the explosion. On that day a great body of petitioners who required the expulsion of the Girondins, not only invaded, but possessed themselves of the Convention—Isnard,† notwithstanding his apparent courage, basely abdicated his seat at the mandate of the mob, and escaped into concealment—Vergniaud attempted a secession and failed ridiculously. At this moment Robespierre presented himself in the tribune, and supported with great zeal the demand of the petitioners. Vergniaud (who had returned to his seat much mortified at the failure of his attempt at secession)

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* M. Thiers, with even more than his usual bad faith, attenuates the violence of this speech into—'*I declare in the name of the Republic that Paris would undergo the vengeance of France, and would be blotted out (rayé) from the list of cities.*' He suppresses all the traces of the tumult which the *Moniteur* gives with more force and detail than we have room to copy; and he winds up by saying that this *réponse solennelle et grande* produced a deep impression on the Assembly—meaning a favourable and sedative one, while it seems to have done the very contrary; and he winds up the general misrepresentation by saying that 'a crowd of voices demanded the printing of the speech,' as a mark of approbation. It appears by the *Moniteur* that one voice only called for the printing, and the affair ended in a feeling the very contrary of what M. Thiers in his Girondism chooses to represent, and without, as far as we can see, the slightest authority.

† He survived the Reign of Terror, and was to be seen in the days of the Directory in the good—that is, the least bad—society of the day, where he was remarkable for being *very noisy* and a *hard drinker*. We see he preserved *ad imum* the same fanfaron character. One might almost suspect that he was drunk when he made this celebrated sortie on the Jacobins.

interrupted the speaker, by exclaiming—'*Come to the point.*' 'I will,' replied Robespierre,—excited and emboldened by the presence of the petitioners, who filled the very benches of the Assembly,—

'I will—and it shall be against *you*—against *you*, who, after the revolution of the *Tenth of August*, endeavoured to bring to the scaffold the patriots who had accomplished it—against *you*, who have menaced Paris with being razed from the face of the earth—against *you*, who would have saved the tyrant had you dared—against *you*, the accomplice of Dumouriez! Yes, *I come to the point*, and I require a decree of accusation against all the accomplices of that traitor, as well as against all the others impeached by the petitioners.'—*Moniteur.*

This vigorous *sortie* was vehemently applauded, and after two days of tumult—terrible almost to sublimity—it was (June 2nd) substantially embodied in a decree, and the Gironde was no more!—literally no more, for not only were its deputies expelled and subsequently guillotined, but the very name of the guilty department was abolished, and it was called, till the 9th Thermidor, *Le Bec d'Ambès.*

From this period may be said to commence Robespierre's personal responsibility in the revolutionary administration: hitherto he was but an individual incendiary, the leader of a party which, though all-powerful out of doors, were still in the minority of the Assembly, and he himself exposed to daily insult and danger. The case was now changed—the former majority were expelled, exiled, imprisoned, silenced—the Mountain became predominant, and Robespierre, in effect, all-powerful.

The *precise* date of Robespierre's accession to responsible authority is stated by different writers with a looseness and mutual contradiction, which prove how carelessly the history of these times has been hitherto written.*

It will, we believe, surprise most readers to be told that any chronological doubt should exist in the history of events so recent—so notorious—written and published from day to day and from year to year, by such an infinite number of pens; but the fact is,

* The life of Robespierre in Mr. Adolphus's very able work—'*Biographical Memoirs of the French Revolution*,' published in 1799, which we have already noticed, is the best we have seen, and indeed the only one which notices adequately the difficulty of the subject and the mystery which hangs over Robespierre's conduct and policy. Subsequent writers, instead of endeavouring to clear up the obscurities indicated by Mr. Adolphus, have taken the easier course of finding nothing to doubt about.

that nothing is more remarkable or embarrassing than the neglect of dates in all those works which are called *Histories of the French Revolution*, the writers of which really seem as if they thought that an *historian* might disdain the humbler merit of chronology. Even in such a loose and desultory sketch as we are writing, we find this difficulty meeting us at every turn. Let us cite as an instance the question we have just mentioned—a very important one—namely, the precise date from which Robespierre, by his entrance into the *Committee of Public Safety*,* may be reckoned to have taken a responsible share in the government—a date which ought to be as well ascertained as the 10th of August or the 9th Thermidor; but upon which no two writers seem to agree.

Montjoye, a contemporary witness, who began his poor and prejudiced history of Robespierre while he was still alive, and published it soon after his fall, gives us to understand that Robespierre was a member of the Committee of Public Safety, as early as its first formation, soon after the death of the king.

Papon in his history states, that Robespierre was an *original* member of the *Committee of Public Safety*, and he too seems to place its creation shortly after the death of the king, and at latest before the 21st March, 1793.

Mignet says that he was elected to it on its first '*renouvellement*' after the 31st May, 1793.

Messrs. Beaulieu and Michaud, in their article in the 'Biographie Universelle,' state, that he was a member of the Committee of *General Defence* before the fall of the Girondins (31st May, 1793), and that *immediately* after that event he assiduously attended the *Committee of Public Safety*.

M. Thiers, on the contrary, states, that it was not till the resignation of Gasparin, in *August*, 1793, that the Convention, *which had hitherto declined to elect Robespierre on any committee*, was now reluctantly subdued into naming him on the Committee of Public Safety.

* We employ this usual title, though it is not an adequate translation of the French '*Salut Public*,' and confounds the attributes of the two great committees of government, which were not merely distinct, but sometimes almost rivals. The Committee *de Salut Public*—literally *public salvation*, was charged with the higher political functions—the extraordinaries, we may call them—of the Revolution, while the Committee *de Sûreté Générale*—*general security* or *safety*, conducted the more ordinary details of administration and police.

Durand de Maillane, a member of the Convention, and a party to all these proceedings, says, that the Committee of *General Defence* was organized on the 25th of March, 1793, with great powers, which however he adds were restricted by the *subsequent* appointment of 'a Committee of *Public Safety, into which Robespierre did not obtain early admission*, but where he was dreaded before he was admitted;' but he does not state the date of that admission.

And, finally, the *Moniteur*, the *dernier resort* in all such cases, states the appointment of a *new* Committee of *Défense Générale, ou du Salut Public*, on the 25th March, 1793, and gives a list of its members, including all the leading men of both sides of the Convention—Vergniaud and *Robespierre**—Sièyes and Danton, &c., to the number of twenty-five; but it is probable that this mixed committee *never met*—for ten days later, on the 6th of April, the formation of a Committee of *Public Safety*, of nine members, was decreed on the motion of Isnard, but he was only the reporter of a committee, and probaby not himself in favour of the measure, which was opposed by his Girondin friends, and carried and the members named by the Jacobins; and to *this* committee—the celebrated Committee of Public Safety—Robespierre did not belong till the 26th July, when he was elected in the room of Gasparin, resigned.

The statements of the *Moniteur*, though imperfect, must be, as far as they go, correct; and they contradict, in one point or another, every one of the former statements except that of Durand, who does not give any date.

With the *Moniteur* open before them, we cannot imagine why all these writers should have stated, so vaguely and discordantly, a fact which, when Robespierre is tried at the bar of posterity, becomes important, not perhaps as to his private character, but as to his public responsibility. It is *one* thing to preach sedition and anarchy as a leader of *Opposition*, and *another* to order and enforce, *as a member of a Government*, the most atrocious violations of law, justice, humanity, and social order: the heart was equally bad in

* The *Index* to the *Moniteur* says '*re-élu*;' but this may refer to his having belonged to the former Committee of General Defence; but it seems that prior to this election, or re-election, Robespierre proposed measures concerning the administration, and especially as to the ministry of war, in the tone of a member of the government; and in one of Mehée's attacks on the Thermidorians it is stated repeatedly that he entered the Committee in June.

both cases—but in the former he can only be charged as one of many *instigators* of crimes, of which, in the latter case, he *was* the chief and most guilty *perpetrator*.

There is another point of chronology still more important to Robespierre's history, which seems to us to have been mistaken.

There was found in Robespierre's papers an *undated* Note, called by Courtois, in his report, '*Note essentielle*,' which commences with a remarkable expression—'*Il faut une volonté* UNE.' This is quoted by Courtois, and by all subsequent writers, as written in the last palmy days of Robespierre's triumph, and as a proof that he was then preparing to usurp the *sole* sovereign authority; but this is certainly an error. On a closer examination of the Note, it will be found, from an incidental allusion to *Custine*, that it must have been written previous to that General's recall from the army, early in July, 1793, and therefore before Robespierre had influence enough in the Convention to be elected into the committees of government. It is clear, also, that it was only the heads of a speech prepared during one of the popular insurrections—probably either that of 10th March, or 31st May, 1793, when assuredly Robespierre was as yet in no condition to dream of establishing a *volonté une* in his own person; and moreover it appears, from the context, that *volonté une* meant—not the *will of one*, but *one will*; for it states that the *volonté une* was to be '*republican*, and to be carried into effect by republican ministers, republican journals, republican deputies, and a republican government'—in short a unity of principle, not a unity of power. So that, in fact, this celebrated paper proves *nothing* as to the design which Robespierre is supposed to have formed above a year after it was really written.

A more minute attention to dates would explain many points of Robespierre's policy.* For instance, from the moment (2nd June, 1793) that his party became the majority, Robespierre's course of proceedings was essentially changed. He now began to defend, even against his own over-zealous partisans, the Convention, the Government, and even the Committee of Public Safety, though the members of this Committee were moderates, and had not been displaced by the late revolution. This change, unnoticed by most

* An able pamphlet, with the quaint title of '*La Tête à la Queue*,' says that Robespierre entered the Committee in *June*.

historians, is, by those who mention it, attributed to a new light broken in upon his mind, an incipient conversion to a principle of moderation. It was no such thing—it was the mere result of his change of position, from being one of the *minority* to being one of the *majority*. He now saw that he should be soon called to the chief direction of affairs, and, like all other Oppositionists who became Ministerialists—was disposed to repress the disorganization which he had hitherto provoked. But he was still but a private man; and in the course of July he seems to have exhibited symptoms of opposition to the measures of the Government. Whether this awoke the Committee to the expediency of securing his co-operation we know not, but we find that on the 27th July, 1793, it announced to the Convention the resignation from ill health of one of its members, Gasparin, and proposed Robespierre as his successor. This admission to power was followed by another mark of distinction from which the jealousy of the Girondins had hitherto excluded him.

It was not till the 23rd August, 1793, that he obtained the honour of being named President * of the Convention. The Girondins had monopolised that honour till their fall, then we find the Jacobin names of Collot, Danton, Herault, and then Robespierre. It is evident that, even after the expulsion of above a hundred of his avowed enemies he was still unpopular with the majority of the Convention. But he cannot even yet be considered as a dictator—that fatal pinnacle he attained only on the death of Hébert, near a year later; and from the 31st May, 1793, to April, 1794, Robespierre and his Jacobins must be considered rather as the colleagues of Danton and the *Cordeliers* † than the

* It is observed by Richer-Lecocq, in his 'Accusateur Public' — there could be no better antidote to ambition than to examine the list of the 76 presidents of the Convention, whose melancholy fates are thus recorded—

Guillotined	18
Suicides to avoid the scaffold	3
Transported	8
Incarcerated	6
Outlawed	22
Went mad	4
	61

† All these clubs took their names from the convents, whose halls, left unappropriated by the expulsion of the monks, were seized upon by the clubs. The Jacobins took possession of a club of the *Dominicans*, who were popularly called *Jacobins*, because their first location in Paris was La Rue St. Jacques. The Cordeliers were *Franciscans*, so called from the *cord* which they wore as a girdle. Their convent near the Luxembourg gave its name to the *Dantonist* Club. The Feuillants were of the order of St. Bernard, and so called from their principal convent at Feuillant in Languedoc. Their convent was nearly opposite that of the Jacobins in the Rue St. Honoré, and still nearer the Hall of the Assembly (the *Manége*). It was here that a moderate club of Constitutionalists, seceders from the Jacobins, endeavoured to establish themselves, and so utterly failed, that the very title 'Feuillant' became a sentence of death.

supreme authority. We may however date from Robespierre's election into the Committee, what is distinctively called the *Reign of Terror*. It is true that the whole revolution was a system of Terror, to which Robespierre had, as we have seen, contributed no small share, but we are now speaking only of that period in which it began to assume that character of systematic and organised cruelty which is commonly, and justly we believe, attributed to his individual temper and influence. It was only by gradual steps that such a tyranny could be carried to the tremendous height it finally attained; but immediately after Robespierre's election we see in the increased activity and thirst of blood exhibited by the Committee indications of his presence—a decree to give the Committee a larger power of arrest—a decree for the trial of General Custine, another for the transfer of the queen to the Conciergerie. On the 23rd August, 1793, was passed the decree of the *Levée en masse*, which would not only secure the frontiers from external enemies, but would remove from the interior all those who were likely to impede the course of domestic despotism. Next came a *Forced Loan*, which plundered and intimidated all the affluent classes. On the 17th September followed the celebrated *Loi des Suspects*, which enacted a series of definitions of those who might—even on the denunciation of an individual—be arrested as *suspected persons*, definitions which included, in one or other of their categories, all man and woman kind. These three laws rendered the government uncontrolled masters of the property and persons of the whole population of France; and lest there should be found in them any latent restriction—any possibility of evasion—a fourth decree, of the 10th October, declared the government *revolutionary*, or, in other words, invested it with an absolute despotism for any object whatsoever which the government should choose to think or call *revolutionary*.*

Such was the early *legislation* of Terror. Before we proceed to show how it was executed, we must pause a moment to consider the personal influence which Robespierre had in that system.

From the 31st May, when Robespierre began to take a part in the direction of affairs, we find him gradually investing himself in deeper and deeper mystery; and as his public authority and its excesses grew more and more notorious, his private conduct and

* See as to the technical import and effect of the word 'revolutionary,' 'Essay on the Revolutionary Tribunals,' p. 433.

objects become more and more obscure. It would be most interesting to pierce that obscurity, to know how he thought, and felt, and what he did in the leisure moments of his unparalleled despotism, but the truth we suppose is, that he had little private life and no moments of leisure. The Committee, the Convention, and the Jacobins, by the day, and latterly the judges and public accusers of the Tribunal by night, must have left him no private moments.

Some authorities, and amongst others, Buonaparte (who had some early connexion with the Robespierres), affect to believe that Maximilian was not the founder of the system of Terror, and that he was for a time inclined to moderate it, and at last fell in an endeavour to arrest and overthrow it. The *motives* of any man, and particularly of one so insulated and reserved as Robespierre, are inscrutable—they are what Thiers emphatically calls the *secret of men's souls*—and convinced as we are that Robespierre possessed an acute, logical, and calculating mind, it would seem, *à priori*, highly probable—and that moral probability is strengthened by many practical indications—that Robespierre entertained some such laudable intentions; but, on the other hand, the great *facts* of the case *chronologically* considered, form, as it seems to us, a body of almost irresistible evidence, that the reigns of Robespierre and of Terror cannot be distinguished in fact, or separated in reason. The four great measures of organized despotism which we have just mentioned, were proposed and adopted *after* Robespierre had been added to the Committee of Public Safety, and *he* had been the only important addition. We shall see presently, in considering the execution of those measures, that the *Terror* grew in frightful intensity in a gradual and exact proportion to the increase of Robespierre's personal authority. We are aware of the fallacy in ordinary affairs of the argument *propter, quia post*—but in this case the steps of Robespierre* were followed so exactly and

* The letters of Collot leave no doubt of his active participation in all that villain's atrocities at Lyons; and there is one letter even more decisive than those addressed to Robespierre himself. It is one addressed to Robespierre's host, Duplay, but meant evidently for the Dictator himself, in whose papers it was found. It is dated, '*Commune Affranchie*, 15 *Frim., An* II.; that is, Lyons, December, 1793; and, after some congratulations on Robespierre's death, and his own active measures for giving effect to the revolutionary spirit, he proceeds:—'We have awakened the prompt and terrible justice of the people, which strides like a thunderbolt, and leaves nothing but ruins after

so invariably by the stream of blood, that we cannot relieve our minds from the conclusion that they must have been cause and consequence.

We now return to the *executive* measures of this deplorable tyranny. Popular massacres were out of fashion. Indeed they were no longer applicable to the projects of Robespierre and his party, who had ceased to be anarchists and were now desirous of consolidating a Government, and who therefore required a *permanent* instrument capable of control—and, instead of such unmanageable *conflagrations*, they erected, like Nebuchadnezzar, a *furnace*, whose intensity they might guide, and the number and quality of whose victims they could select.

Immediately after the *Tenth of August*, 1792, a special tribunal was established for the trial of political offences. In the height of the struggle between the Jacobins and Girondins, on the 16th March, 1793, the Convention was terrified into giving it, on the proposition of Danton, a new constitution and more extensive powers. It was even proposed by the Jacobins to change its name to the *Revolutionary Tribunal*: the Convention, still under some degree of Girondin influence, saw in the word *revolutionary* a contradiction to all legality, and named it only Tribunal *Extraordinaire*. We shall see presently how it regained its original designation, and how well it deserved it. This tribunal was the *furnace* required—it was permanent, manageable, servile—and, under the forms of what had replaced law and justice in France, was capable and willing to exercise any degree of oppression, and to commit any extent of murder.

For some months, this tribunal sent to the scaffold but a few, and these inconsiderable victims. It was now to be brought into greater activity, but its progress was regulated with art. The first considerable victim (17th August, 1793) was General Custine*—

it. By destroying an infamous and rebellious town, all others are brought to obedience. We employ, as far as possible, in its destruction, cannon and explosions; but you must feel that with a population of 150,000 we find many difficulties. The popular axe disposed of 20 heads a-day, without frightening them: the prisons were still full. We have created a Commission, for the more rapid judgment of these traitors: 64 of these conspirators were shot yesterday; 230 will fall to-day. I shall take care to have Robespierre's last speech copied into our journals. Present the assurance of my sincere and unalterable friendship to your republican family. Shake Robespierre's hand heartily for me.'—*Pap. Rob.* 186.

* Of the thousands who died on the scaffold in France, this General and Madame du Barri appear to have been the *only* two who showed any pusillanimous weakness. Poor Madame du

his execution intimidated *the generals.* There was a certain incendiary journalist, named Gorsas,* whose brutal violence had procured his election to the Convention, where he had joined the Girondins. On their proscription he had escaped and was outlawed; he was taken, and being identified was sent by the Revolution to the scaffold on the 7th October. This was the first instance of the immolation of a *deputy*—it was well chosen—Gorsas, besides being a personal enemy of Robespierre, was odious and contemptible, and, having been outlawed, a trial was not necessary—but it sufficiently announced what was intended for the rest of the Girondins, who languished in prison till the public mind should be sufficiently *blooded* to enable the Jacobins to proceed to their condemnation.

With this object, we incline to believe, rather than any other,† the Queen was next immolated (16th October). The detestable calumny which Hébert ventured against this injured—and not merely *innocent* but—*admirable* woman is notorious; but it is not so well known that Robespierre, who was certainly the immediate mover of her execution, expressed great indignation at the charge—not at its falsehood and atrocity, but at its *impolicy*—'That fool Hébert,' he exclaimed, 'will make her an object of pity!' Between the 16th and 30th of October, *sixteen* other victims, two, three, and four at a time, prepared the Parisians for the execution, on the 31st, of the *Twenty-one* Girondins. These men were so clearly *innocent* of the crimes of which they were charged, and were so clearly *guilty* of what was then called 'patriotism,' and defended themselves so well by that eloquence which had been so long the *tocsin* of the Revolution, that the tribunal hesitated to condemn them. The danger to the cause of the Jacobins was great; but their audacity, or, we should rather say, that of Robespierre, was

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Barri had probably little resource in her own mind, though innocent of the crimes for which she suffered; the retrospect of her former life could afford her little consolation or courage; but it seems doubtful whether the *alleged* pusillanimity of Custine was not really the contrition of religion. He was accompanied to the last moments by a priest whose exhortations he appeared to listen to with feelings of piety and compunction, which the Jacobins would no doubt characterise as a cowardly weakness.—*Diurnal*, ii. 85.

* Gorsas had been a schoolmaster.—*Hist. de l'Espion.*, ii. 69. He had been a *journalist* early in the Revolution, and set up, after the 10th of August, as a printer. He showed a good deal of courage, and ended his life with religious sentiments.

† Mercier confesses that he cannot guess why the Queen, and still less why Madame Elizabeth, were executed.—*Nouv. Tab.* § 87.

greater. It was no doubt under his impulse, that on the 28th October, the fourth day of the trial, the Jacobins, on the motion of Hébert, expressed their indignation at such a delay of justice, and voted an address to be presented to the Convention, by the Club *en masse*, accompanied by its galleries, requiring *judgment* on the accused within twenty-four hours. This address, presented on the 29th, was moulded by Robespierre into a decree, that '*Whenever any trial should have lasted three days, the tribunal might declare itself satisfied of the guilt of prisoners—might stop the defence—close the discussions—and send the accused to death!*' And lest any possible chance of a prisoner's acquittal should remain, Billaud-Varennes proposed, and the Convention decreed, that the title of Tribunal *Extraordinaire* should be changed into that of Tribunal *Révolutionnaire*—by this change of a single word, giving the judges a *revolutionary discretion*—in other words—arbitrary power! These decrees—*passed* at the Tuileries whilst the trial was *pending* at the Palais—were that evening sent to the Tribunal, read, and inscribed on its register at its sitting next morning. In the course of the day the bloody suggestion was adopted, the jury declared itself satisfied, and at midnight on the 30th of October, condemned the *Twenty-one* to death, who were next morning executed * as already stated, in the Place de la Révolution, under the windows of the Hall of the Convention, the scene of their crimes, their triumphs, and their fall.

Here Robespierre was avowedly the chief director; but he acted with the advice and concurrence of Danton; and for his vengeance there may be, as we before observed, this palliative, that the Girondins had been the assailants, and that, if he had not sent them to the scaffold, they would undoubtedly have sent him.

Up to this point, therefore, the advocates of Robespierre might have some colour for doubting that he was instigated by an *innate* cruelty and *gratuitous* love of blood. Heretofore, the intoxication of faction, the frenzy of revenge, and the necessity of self-defence, might be alleged in excuse for his proceedings; but henceforth these palliations, miserable as they are, cannot be adduced. We must look for other motives.

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* Twenty only were executed: one, Dufriche-Valazé, on hearing the sentence, had stabbed himself, but the tribunal ordered that his corpse should be carried in the same cart with his living friends to the place of execution —an unheard-of barbarity.

This blow, struck at the heart of the national representation itself, in the persons of its most distinguished members, was rendered still more formidable by the poor and frequently ignoble defence made by these terror-stricken men, and paralysed every soul. The Convention became from this hour a silent and servile accomplice in the atrocities of its Committees and their obedient Tribunal; and, except Robespierre's own, there was not a head which did not tremble at the fall of Vergniaud's.

But was even he himself at ease? Far from it. His anxieties and tortures were greater than those of the most tortured of his victims:—

'Nec hos
Evasisse putes, quos diri conscia facti
Mens habet attonitos, et surdo verbere cædit,
Occultum quatiente animo tortore flagellum!'*

He had committed an enormous *fault*, as well as an atrocious *crime*, in violating the persons of the national representatives: he found, too late, that he had made his position so slippery with blood, that every movement menaced him with an inevitable fall; and '*assassination*,' and the 'approaching sacrifice of his life,' became the first objects of his thoughts and the prominent topics in all his harangues, even when he seemed at an inaccessible pinnacle of elevation.

Danton, hitherto his associate and champion, the audacious Danton, began to hesitate. The motives usually assigned for this change were indolence and self-indulgence. He had accumulated a considerable fortune by his corrupt dealings with d'Orleans, by peculations in a mission to Belgium, and by other dishonest means; he had also about this time made a decent marriage with a young and handsome wife, and was certainly, with all his political ferocity, of a social, sybarite disposition. These circumstances would account naturally enough for his wishing to make a safe retreat, but there were two other considerations which may have tended to wean him from political life. His first object had been the elevation of d'Orleans to the throne; all expectations of that na-

* 'Robespierre grew more and more gloomy; his repulsive looks frightened every one. He could talk of nothing but assassination, and again assassination, and always assassination. He was afraid that his own shadow would assassinate him. The last time I saw him his looks were equally alarmed and alarming.'— *Vilatte.*

ture had been gradually fading, and were at last extinguished by his execution, 6th November, 1793, a few days after that of the Girondins. The fall of this great accomplice, which dissipated any remaining fumes of his early ambition, must also have excited, bold as he was, some apprehensions for his personal safety, and might very reasonably explain the cooling of his revolutionary zeal. But, secondly, Danton's *specialty* was his power of raising and directing popular insurrections—mobs against *authorities;* but when after the victory over the Girondins the mob itself became the sovereign—the *pique* the sceptre, the *bonnet rouge* the crown —and Danton himself one of the chief ministers of the Reign of Terror—there was no longer any antagonistic power to intimidate, no rival authority to pull down, and Danton's occupation was gone! Whether he now meditated a real retirement into private life as soon as he could safely accomplish it, or was waiting till the domination of Robespierre should offer the occasion of a popular insurrection against his usurpation, can never perhaps be known. We rather incline to the latter conjecture; but it is certain that he acted as if he had at last taken fright—he declined to be of the Committee of Public Safety—obtained leave of absence from the sittings of the Convention, and endeavoured to escape notice and drown his apprehensions in the enjoyment of social and domestic life.

But the rest of Robespierre's pack of bloodhounds grew only more and more ravenous for a continuation of their daily prey, and Maximilian began to see the risk of being devoured by his own dogs. He endeavoured to appease them by accumulated carcasses. But all would not do—the bloodhounds were insatiable, and there were many and not obscure indications that Robespierre himself was in imminent danger. The leader of this new faction—which Camille Desmoulins designated by the new coined term of *ultra-revolutionists*—was Hébert, the editor of a blasphemous, indecent, bloody, and every way infamous journal, called *Le Père Duchesne;* Vincent, a clerk in the War Office; Momoro, a printer; Grammont, a player; Ronsin, who had been a playwriter, and was now a general; Clootz, a crazy Prussian; and Chaumette,* an attorney's

* His real name was *Peter Gaspard Chaumet*, but on his election to be Procureur de la Commune, he changed 'the name of two *Saints*, in whom,' he said, 'he had no faith, into *Anaxagoras*'—but he was still in all public acts, in the *Almanach National*, and in the *Moniteur*, called *Chaumet*, till about May, 1793, when we find him called *Chaumette*, and this became the general orthography.

clerk, now the procureur-général of the *Commune* of Paris. The first hostility of these men against their late idol took a singular turn. Robespierre had always professed some respect for moral ideas, and was supposed to be not unfavourable—on political grounds at least—to religious worship. A certain priest of the name of Gobel, who had embraced the Revolution with a blind and impotent zeal, had been elected Archbishop of Paris. The Hébertists persuaded this poor wretch to go in procession, in all his archiepiscopal state, and with his clerical attendants, to the bar of the Convention, where he delivered up the insignia, and abjured the obligation, of his sacred character—while his followers explicitly avowed atheism, and demanded the extermination of all superstition. Several bishops and priests, members of the Convention, followed this impious example; Christianity was publicly abolished in France, and the worship of Reason substituted in its stead. But that was not all. Chaumette, who was the chief legal magistrate of Paris, procured a decree of the municipality for the celebration in the *ci-devant* churches of the worship of the new divinity;* the Cathedral of Notre Dame was designated as the *Temple of Reason*, and on the 10th of November was celebrated the feast of the Goddess—represented by Momoro's wife—who, in an indecent attire, was seated on the high altar, and received and returned the devotion of her votaries by a *kiss*.

In this shocking farce Robespierre saw not only a dissolution of all morals and of the bonds of human society, but an insult to his known sentiments, and, *perhaps*, an anticipated attack on his own *intentions* of returning to some system of moral and religious government. He boldly assailed Hébert in the Jacobin Club—ridiculed and denounced his new religion, and inculcated the advantage and necessity of a moral and religious constitution of society in a sensible and vigorous speech, in which he repeated Voltaire's celebrated phrase—'*If the Divinity did not exist, a wise legislator would have invented it.*'

This annihilated the *worship of Reason*, but only further exasperated the Hébertists. Danton by this time had discovered that retirement would afford him no security; and, suspecting that he was equally obnoxious to Hébert and Robespierre, returned to his

* A sketch of some of these profanations is given in Mercier's *Nouv. Tab.* § 151, 152.

duties in the Convention. His re-appearance was the signal for his impeachment by Hébert; but Robespierre, exasperated and alarmed by the audacity of that villain, defended Danton with singular boldness and ability—we should have added, with generosity, did not the sequel prove that he could have no such feeling. The Hébertists thus doubly defeated had recourse to Danton and Robespierre's own system of raising the *Sections* and their mobs against the Convention, under the pretence of stimulating public justice against the counter-revolutionists. They belonged to Danton's old club of the Cordeliers, and affected to maintain the principles from which they accused him of being an apostate. It was now that, in opposition to these *new* Cordeliers, Camille Desmoulins began a journal called *The Old Cordelier*. Desmoulins had been one of the first firebrands of the Revolution, and had assumed the atrocious title of *Attorney-General of the Lanterne*, in those days when the Lanterne was the instrument of popular murder; but, like Danton, he had lately married a young and rich wife, and like him, he began to feel some emotions of humanity when *he found his own property and person in danger*. The '*Old Cordelier*' was the first publication which since the Revolution had dared to talk of *clemency* and of closing the bleeding wounds of the country; and coming from so unexpected a quarter, it was received with prodigious applause, and is to this day quoted as a model of wit, pleasantry, argument, and eloquence all combined in the cause of humanity. To us it appears that its literary merits are much over-rated, though no doubt, to a public so long trembling under the fear of death, its effect must have been very great. Nor did its publication require much courage — of which, indeed, Desmoulins' share was but small—for he was supported and prompted by the powerful Danton, and even by the still more powerful Robespierre.*

But he overshot his mark: Robespierre saw with pleasure the attack on the Hébertists, but it did not require *his* jealousy to see in the *Old Cordelier* (the very title of which was offensive to the leader of the rival club of the Jacobins) many bitter and ominous sarcasms against his own system; and he could not but resent that reproduction of his old aristocratic signature of *De* Robespierre,

* Robespierre read and corrected the proof sheets of the first numbers of the '*Old Cordelier*.' This we know from both him and Desmoulins.

which we before noticed. The public success, however, of this journal, and the co-operation of Danton, assured Robespierre that he might venture to proceed to extremities with Hébert and his followers. They were arrested on the night of the 13th of March, 1794. Their trial began on the 20th, and having lasted *three days*, the jury, under the decree made on Hébert's own motion against the Girondins, declared themselves satisfied; and on the 24th, Hébert and his followers were condemned—*arte perire suâ*—and executed the same evening, to the number of *nineteen* persons, perishing within one hour on one scaffold.

Universal joy and hope pervaded France at this act of retributive justice. It was received as the dawn of a new era. Robespierre, Danton, and Desmoulins were supposed to be united in a system of mercy and moderation; and at this moment it seems as if Robespierre had had it in his power to close the horrors of the Revolution. Why he did not do so appears to us very difficult, on any of the principles of human action, to understand—but entirely inexplicable on the supposition adopted—with more or less confidence—by most historians and biographers,—by Buonaparte,—by the Abbé Guillon in his *History of the Martyrs*, and by a large portion of the literary world,—that Robespierre entertained, towards the end of his life, what were called moderate principles. Here was a most remarkable crisis; he had avenged at once morality, religion, and social order by the punishment of Hébert; he had lately added to his fame and his popularity by his generous defence of Danton: Camille Desmoulins had, still more recently, advocated clemency with, as was supposed, his concurrence; his reunion with these old friends appeared now complete, and cemented by the strongest interests and on the best of all grounds; yet, in an interval of *ten days*, the whole scene was changed in the most unexpected and terrible manner. He had overthrown and sent to the scaffold—with Danton's, at least, tacit consent—their common enemies on the 24th of March; and on the 4th of April, Danton and Desmoulins, his old friends and allies, were—will posterity believe it?—*arrested*, and sent on the 5th to *the scaffold*, still wet with the blood of their antagonists and victims! What could have occurred in that short interval? The sarcasms of Desmoulins may have offended Robespierre; but they were sarcasms principally directed against the common enemy, and which had

contributed to the common success. Besides, after all, in such grave and vital matters, gay and even bitter pleasantries can hardly account for such desperate extremities. But what had Danton done? Why was he so generously defended in November —so suddenly sacrificed in April? He was certainly not eager in the prosecution of Hébert, as is shown by—amongst graver proofs —a slight circumstance which is nevertheless worth preserving. On the 16th of March a deputation appeared at the bar to congratulate the Convention on the fall of Hébert, and one of the deputation *sang a song* made for the occasion. Danton was offended at this; and the great Danton's *last act* was the obtaining a decree of the National Assembly that henceforward no one should be allowed to sing songs at its bar. (*Moniteur*, 17*th March*, 1794.) But though no doubt alarmed at Hébert's fate, he had concurred in it, and had certainly shown—in a meeting which a common friend had negotiated between him and Robespierre—no disposition to play an independent part. The lion appeared to have been completely tamed, and appeared to desire no better than to live in domestic tranquillity. Nor has any reason been ever assigned why Robespierre did not accept the overtures then made to him for an entire and cordial reconciliation.

Robespierre himself, in one of his speeches, gives us his own bill of indictment against Danton:—

'I must add to this that a particular duty is imposed upon me to defend the purity of principles against the efforts of intrigue. For unto me also have they tried to inspire fears. They tried to make me believe that the danger which threatens Danton would also reach me. They represented him to me as a man to whom I ought to attach myself—that he would be to me a shield and rampart, which, once knocked down, would leave me exposed to all the darts of my enemies. I have been written to—Danton's friends have sent me letters, have persecuted me with their discourses; they believed that the remembrance of an old friendship (*liaison*)—a former faith in false virtues—would induce me to slacken my zeal and my passion for liberty. Well, I declare that not one of those motives has made the slightest impression on me. I declare that, were it true that Danton's dangers were to become my own, that if they were to cause the aristocracy another step to seize me, I should not look upon that circumstance as a public calamity. What are dangers to me? My life belongs to my country, my heart is free from fears;

and, if I died, it would be without reproach, and without ignominy.' (Applause.) . . . . . .

'Danton, the most dangerous of the enemies of the country if he had not been the most cowardly*—Danton, temporizing with every crime, connected with every plot, promising to the criminals protection, and to the patriots fidelity—artful in giving his treasons the pretext of public good—in justifying his vices by his pretended faults—he contrived through his friends to have the conspirators who were on the point of effecting the ruin of the republic, accused in an insignificant or favourable manner, in order that he might himself have an opportunity of defending them—he intrigued with Brissot, corresponded with Ronsin, encouraged Hébert, and prepared for every event, so as to be sure that *he* should gain whether *they* failed or succeeded, and be the better able to rally all the enemies of liberty against the republican government.'—*Rapport du* 18 *Flor.*, p. 9.

These vague and, in some points, very obscure charges, throw little light on the question, and upon the whole, we can bring our minds to rest upon two only explanations: either Danton and his friends saw in Robespierre an implacable enemy to mercy, and had therefore formed some intrigue to bring him to the scaffold; or, as has been surmised, St Just, Couthon, Collot, and the violent Jacobins, menaced Robespierre himself, if he did not consent to the sacrifice of Danton. Either of these explanations is full of difficulty, and we must leave the question as obscure as we have found it, with this difference only, that other writers have evaded it, and that our doubts may perhaps have the effect of suggesting some deeper researches into this enigmatical point of the history of the Revolution.†

Robespierre now stood alone, *more dreaded* and *less powerful* than ever. The death of Danton, so long his friend and so often

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* The original epithet is *lache*, which may mean something more than mere personal cowardice—the effect of meanness as well as fear. Danton himself boasted that his main characteristic was audacity; but audacity is not always courage. Danton certainly did not expose himself any more than Robespierre on the 10th August, and finally lost himself for want of decision, if not of resolution. Mercier says that his boldness in life, and even on the scaffold, was inflamed with wine. '*The savage Danton, all whose decrees smell of wine, died intoxicated.*'—*Nouv. Tab.* 102. It is remarkable that in Robespierre's catalogue of Danton's crimes, he does not include the topic which others have so copiously handled—his connection with d'Orleans. Had Robespierre himself some secret sin of that kind?

† See p. 472.

his defender, alienated, and we may say, revolted—by its inexplicable motives and its obvious ingratitude and impolicy—his stanchest adherents. When Danton fell, there was no man who could think his own life worth half-an-hour's purchase, and in every heart there was excited a double feeling of *subservience* and *suspicion;* they became cautious not to provoke, and yet anxious to relieve themselves from such an unintelligible tyranny.

And now again, if Robespierre had any moderate designs, he was the uncontrolled and indisputable master of his own policy, and might, and must have shown some tendency to moderation; but, instead of any such symptom, the march of legal massacre became more rapid and bloody. The executions, which since the death of the Girondins had seldom exceeded *eight* or *ten* per diem, and in one case—that of Hébert—ONLY reached *nineteen*, now became frequently *thirty*, *forty*, *fifty*, and *sixty!* We have examined, as originally published from the *procès verbaux* of the Revolutionary Tribunal, the '*Liste Générale des Condamnés*,' and we have extracted the following table of the results, which we think will astonish our readers, and prove that the executions grew gradually with the personal influence of Robespierre, and became enormous in proportion as he successively extinguished his rivals.

Numbers condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal of Paris in each Month, from its first institution (17*th August*, 1792) *to the fall of Robespierre* (27*th July*, 1794).

1792.	August	3	victims.
	September	4	
	October	16	
	[*Tribunal re-modelled in March*, 1793.]		
1793.	April	9	
	May	9	
	June	14	
	July	13	
	[*Robespierre elected into the Committee of Public Safety.*]		
	August	5	
	September	15	
	October	60	including *Brissot*, &c
	November	53	
	December	73.	

1794.	January	83	
	February	75	
	March	123	including *Hébert*, &c.
	April	263	including *Danton*, &c.
	May	324	
	June	672	
	July	835	*exclusive* of Robespierre and his accomplices.

Here then we see that before Robespierre came into the government the numbers were *comparatively* small—those of 14 and 13, in June and July, 1793, were swelled by some prisoners from La Vendée and Orleans, for which the government in Paris was not so immediately responsible—but soon after Robespierre was elected into the Committee the numbers suddenly rose from 15 to 50, 60, 70, 80. In the month in which he had dispatched the ferocious Hébert, they rose to 123; in April, when he had gotten rid of Danton, to 263; and in the subsequent three months of his uncontrolled and autocratical administration, to 324, 672, and 835.

What can be opposed to these figures, extracted from the official returns of the Tribunal?

It is true that Robespierre had ceased about the end of June to *attend the Committee*,* but his instruments, St. Just and Couthon, were there; and, moreover, it is known that Fouquier Tinville, the public accuser, received every day his personal directions on the lists of victims. To the foregoing astonishing account of the *monthly* executions, we think it worth while to add the *daily* detail of the two last months:—

June.

Day.	Victims.	Day.	Victims.	Day.	Victims.
1	13	11	22	21	25
2	13	12	17	22	15
3	32	13	23	23	19
4	16	14	38	24	25
5	6	15	19	25	44
6	20	16	42	26	47
7	21	17	61	27	30
8	*Decadi.*†	18	*Decadi.*	28	*Decadi.*
9	22	19	15	29	20
10	13	20	37	30	14

* During the 45 days that preceded the retirement of Robespierre from the Committee the number of victims was 577; for the 45 days following up to the 9th Thermidor the number was 1286.—*Rapport de Courtin*, p. 100.

† The *Decadi*, which had been substituted for Sunday, was a public holiday.

July.

Day.	Victims.	Day.	Victims.	Day.	Victims.
1	23	10	44	19	28
2	30	11	6	20	14
3	19	12	28	21	28
4	27	13	37	22	46
5	28	14	—	23	55
6	29	15	29	24	36
7	67	16	30	25	38
8	*Decadi.*	17	40	26	54
9	60	18	*Decadi.*	27	42

These things happened in our own time—thousands are still living who saw them, yet it seems almost incredible that *batches* (*fournées*—such was the familiar phrase)—of *sixty* victims should be condemned in one morning by the same tribunal, and executed the same afternoon, on the same scaffold. These *batches* comprised all ranks, ages, sexes: the most different and even contradictory crimes were combined in the same accusation; persons were executed for *conspiring together*, who never saw one another till they met on the scaffold; the majority of charges were vague and visionary, some unintelligible, and many even ridiculous. In the confusion of that continuous massacre, we find all that was interesting for youth and beauty,—venerable for age and virtues,—respectable for loyalty to the old constitution,—notorious for services to the republic,—or distinguished for literature or talents. Nor was poverty, obscurity, or even turpitude a protection: the indigent died with the rich—the artizan with the magistrate—the peasant with the prince—and shameless prostitutes, '*furies of the guillotine*,' with the amiable and heroic models of every female virtue.

If the energies of the Revolutionary Tribunal had been solely directed against the rich and great, whose hostility the government might have dreaded, we could have understood some motive for this incessant slaughter, but the examination of the *procès verbaux* proves that the great majority of the victims were of the middle and inferior classes, and consisted of persons who would probably have had no desire, and certainly had no power, to oppose the government. There was, no doubt, much private revenge and much pecuniary rapacity gratified in the course of those executions: but that could not have gone to any great extent, and would only have profited the underlings; for Robespierre had few personal

enemies because he had few personal acquaintance, and he certainly was not sullied by any pecuniary corruption. The only rational explanation we can discover for the continuation of this frightful system is, that in the dark intrigues with which he was surrounded he was unable to pause, and still less to retreat; and the best we can believe of him is that he continued the slaughter in the prospect of finding opportunities of including in it (as he had already done Hébert and Danton) the rest of the tigers,—the Talliens, Collots, Bourdons, Barrères, Fouchés,—by whom he was surrounded. This conjecture is corroborated by the well-known fact, that his fall was caused by the certainty which these men obtained that he entertained designs for their immediate extermination.

Some details of these extravagant butcheries, for which hecatombs is too feeble a name, will be found in the succeeding Essays on the Revolutionary Tribunals and the Guillotine; but there is one case which, from its connexion with Robespierre personally, as well as for its peculiar and complicated atrocity, deserves to be particularly noticed in this place. On the 22nd May, 1794, a man of the name of Lamiral formed, it is said, the resolution to assassinate Robespierre, but, not being able to reach him, contented himself with discharging a pistol at Collot d'Herbois, who now occupied a place in the public eye next to Robespierre. The day following, the 23rd, a young girl named Cécile Renaud, with a bundle under her arm, came to Duplay's, Robespierre's residence, to inquire for Robespierre; Robespierre had a volunteer body guard of *sans-culottes* who accompanied him, armed with pikes, whenever he went abroad, and who, at other times, were to be seen lounging about the porch of Duplay's house;* the attempt of Lamiral made these people suspicious,—they examined the girl and her bundle, in which they found some clothes and *a knife*: some accounts do not mention *the knife*, and some say *two knives*;—when asked what she wanted with Robespierre, and why she carried these things, she replied, 'She wanted to see Robespierre, because she was curious to see a *tyrant*,—that she had no intention to use the knife,—and that she had brought a change of linen because she expected to be sent to prison, and from prison to the scaffold.'

* Nicholas, Calandini, and Daillet: 'Daillet slept on the floor in Robespierre's *cabinet*, and, as well as Nicholas and Calandini, accompanied him everywhere.'—*Giffroy*, 417.

She added, that 'she was a royalist, because she preferred *one* king *to fifty thousand tyrants*'—and concluded by boldly demanding to be led at once to the guillotine. A day or two after, a young man of the name of Saintonax (Thiers and Laponneraye, following the *Moniteur*, call him by the then odious title of an *ex*-monk,—the *Liste Générale* designates him a surgical student), on hearing at Choisy sur Seine the attempt of Lamiral, regretted that it had failed. And one Cardinal, a schoolmaster in Paris, had said, when elevated with wine, to a friend who betrayed him, that the French were base cowards to submit to such tyranny. Some writers doubt whether there was any real design against Robespierre, and imagine that, jealous * of Collot's being selected as a worthier object of assassination, he falsely represented himself as having been the first object of Lamiral, and got up the scene of Cécile Renaud to counterbalance the popularity which the former event was likely to confer on Collot. There is something to countenance this opinion. The *possibility* of an intention to *assassinate* turns altogether on the fact of the *knife* or *knives*. Now, in all the earlier and immediately contemporaneous accounts, there is no mention of *any knife*. It is remarkable, too, that while the attack on Collot was blazoned by the Government in the Convention, no mention was made of Cécile's attempt till a question was asked about it, and then Barrère, on the 26th, made a report, in which the facts are stated as above, with, however, the important omission of the knife. The fact we believe to be, that she had a knife, but it was such a one as all the middle and lower classes in France were then in the habit of carrying to cut their victuals, and which there was no reason for suspecting to be an instrument of assassination, and this accounts for the general statement that she had no weapon. The earlier writers—Miss Williams, Pagès, Adolphus, as well as Lacretelle and others, state distinctly that she had no weapon whatsoever. We have not, at present, the means of examining this matter more deeply, but we think it probable that Cécile Renaud [illegible] some vague intention of imitating Charlotte Corday; she, [illegible]er, seems to have been a weak-minded, ignorant girl, wh[illegible] not thought very distinctly of her object, and not at all of its [illegible] This opinion is corroborated by the

* 'Robespierre, envying C[illegible] the honour of an attempt on *his* life, [illegible] and publishes that a girl of sixteen had attempted his days.'—*Nouv. Tab.* 239.

fact that the trials were not hurried on with the usual velocity—time, it seems, was taken for a full investigation. The attempts were made on the 21st and 22nd May, and it appears by the *Liste Générale* that the execution did not take place till three weeks after. Saintonax and Cardinal were certainly not parties to either attempt, but all were sent to the scaffold together, as might be expected, even from a soberer tribunal than that which had condemned a sempstress for saying 'a fig for the nation,' and a tinman for selling sour wine. But there appears no pretence for involving in the same fate the father, the brother, and the aunt of Cécile* and a multitude of other persons, who could certainly have had no concern in it;—the venerable Sombreuil, whose life had been saved, in the massacres of September, by the heroism of his daughter, who had the astonishing firmness to *drink a cup of human blood* as the price of her father's pardon—Madame de Sainte Amaranthe† and her daughter and son, aged nineteen and seventeen—Michonis, a member of the Municipality, obscurely implicated in a rash and hopeless scheme for the escape of the queen from the Conciergerie—Madame Buret, an actress of the Opera, with a girl of eighteen, her servant—and about *fifty other* persons of the most different classes—who all accompanied Cécile Renaud and Lamiral to the scaffold, clothed like them, as a greater mark of ignominy, '*in red shirts, the costume of the murderers.*' And, as a climax to all this atrocity, Barrère, in his report on the affair, called Cécile 'an agent of England;' and on the strength of that imputation, induced the Convention to pass the celebrated decree, that no quarter should be given by the armies in the field to British or Hanoverians.

About this time must be dated, if indeed it ever existed, the idea that Robespierre is said to have formed of a marriage with Madame Royale, then a prisoner in the Temple.‡ This was frequently alleged in several publications after his fall—the earliest we

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* Mr. Alison says her two brothers, soldiers, were guillotined; Thiers says they did not arrive in Paris from the army till after Robespierre's fall: both wrong. One brother, a quarter-master in the army, was in St. Pélagie on the 4th July, and wrote to *request Robespierre to be his advocate* on his trial.—*Pap.* i. 191. The other was in the Luxembourg, and both were on the 1st Fructidor, 18th August (*Mém.* p. 1.363), on the motion of Bourdon, set at liberty.

† See p. 496.

‡ See Essay on the 'Captivity in the Temple.'

find is in a little pamphlet of eight pages, entitled *Nouveaux et intéressans Détails de l'horrible Conspiration de Robespierre et de ses Complices.* It is without name or date, but was probably published about the third or fourth day after Robespierre's fall. Though it professed to quote the reports of Barrère and Barras, it is obviously, both from its form and style, a mere hawker's pennyworth, and of no authority whatever except as evidence of the rumours of the streets. Towards the conclusion we find this paragraph:—

'On the 8th [Thermidor] a municipal officer said to some citizens who were rejoicing at the success of the arms of the Republic, "Should you be surprised, if to-morrow we were to have a new king proclaimed?" On the morning of the 10th the daughter of the tyrant Capet, contrary to her custom, rose at the point of day and dressed herself in her best attire; *on the 12th she put on mourning.*'

These statements as to the princess are mere nonsense. She was never out of mourning since her father's death—her mother was but eight months dead—her aunt but two. But even as to the vision imputed to Robespierre, there is every reason for disbelieving that it could have entered his cool calculating head, but at that time nothing was too extravagant to be imputed to him, and this conjecture may have arisen from some vague rumour of a fact, which long after came to light, that Robespierre had paid a visit to the young Princess in the Temple, on the 11th May, 1794—the very day after the execution of Madame Elizabeth.

Anterior, however, to this massacre, commonly called *Les Chemises Rouges*, which was executed on the 17th June, 1794, Robespierre exhibited what he thought the master-stroke of his policy, and what, if ever he meditated a dictatorial power, he meant to be its basis. He addressed to the Convention on the 7th May, a long report on 'the relation of religious and moral ideas with republican principles,' and concluded by proposing that the Republic should formally acknowledge the SUPREME BEING,* and should on the 8th June celebrate in His honour a national festival. In ordinary circumstances such a proposition would have been equally impious and absurd; but we must recollect that

* Any phrase to avoid the acknowledgment of *God!* Mercier's errand-boy, about fourteen years old, told him after this *fête*—'there is no longer a *God*, only Robespierre's *Supreme Being*.'—*Nouv. Tab.* 237.

the existence of a *Supreme Being* had been formally denied in France—that the altars had been polluted by the adoration of prostitutes—that the cemeteries bore the inscription prescribed by law, *Death is an eternal sleep**—in short, that atheism was part and parcel of the existing constitution, and, what was worse, of the general habits of the people. So amalgamated had this notion become with all revolutionary feelings, that no individuals, nor even the committees of government, either dared to attempt, or, had they dared, could have hoped, to overthrow this miserable doctrine. Nothing short of the sovereign authority of the Convention could at that moment have risked so anti-revolutionary a proceeding, and the absurdity of the decree is therefore fairly attributable, not so much to its movers, as to the public opinion which required so strange a corrective. The report, or rather speech, in which Robespierre proposed this decree, is far from evidencing any return to a sound system of either morals or politics. As to *religion*† he says not a word, but loses himself in the vaguest and flimsiest *deism;* while, as to 'superstition and priests,' he is as severe and sanguinary as Hébert could have desired. The report was of course adopted; the festival was decreed, but so inveterate was the contrary prejudice, that it utterly failed; and although we will not say that this *alone* caused the ruin of its author, it certainly enabled those who hated and feared him on other grounds to accelerate that ruin. The public and part of the secret history‡ of that festival is well known. We shall not repeat it. Robespierre was for the second time chosen President of the Convention *ad hoc*, and the day—8th June, 1794—a remarkably fine one—opened with a general exhilaration which seems to have thawed even his reserve; he played his part with spirit, eloquence, and considerable effect, and may have been for a few hours satisfied that he had now attained the summit of unrivalled power. But before the day was over, he had received

* See the apostate priest Fouché's 'Ordonnance for Funerals and Cemeteries.'

† It is clear from the letters and notes of Payen (*Papiers*, ii. 363–394), who was one of Robespierre's confidants, that they were as rancorous against Christianity as Hébert.

‡ See the 'Mémoires' of Vilatte, one of Robespierre's subordinate partisans, which, though liable to suspicion and even to contradiction in some of their details, give many interesting facts of this the *first* and *last* scene in which Robespierre, contrary to the cautious reserve of his whole life, exhibited himself as the solitary depositary of the public authority.

from the expressions and manners of the colleagues who surrounded him, and particularly of some members of the committee, strong intimations that personal animosities existed, and that the perils and difficulties of his position were—not terminated, but—increased. There was found in his papers the following note in his own hand:

'The day of the fête of the *Etre Suprême*, in presence of the people, Bourdon de Loise ventured on this subject the *coarsest sarcasms* and the most indecent declamations. He pointed out mischievously to the members of the Convention the *marques d'intérêt* the public gave *the President*, from which he drew atrocious conclusions *dans le sens des ennemis de la République*.'—*Papiers*, ii. 19.

This paper contained also hostile observations on Leonard Bourdon, Dubois-Crancé, Delmas, and Thurial, who would no doubt have been all included in a new proscription, if the dictator had not been anticipated and himself proscribed.

From this moment must be dated his declension: he found himself involved in petty squabbles, not merely with individual members of the Convention, but with those committees who, from having been so long his slaves, now presumed to become (without yet daring open opposition) the suspicious critics, and even censors of his propositions.

He soon saw that a new struggle was inevitable, and prepared himself to deal with his old friends and new enemies, as he had so successfully done in nearly similar circumstances with Hébert and Danton—of whose party, indeed, his present antagonists might be called the *tail*. But the present case was even more serious—first, because the fate of Hébert and Danton was itself a warning to their successors in Robespierre's hatred; and secondly, because he had now to overcome, not individual deputies, but his colleagues, aye, and the *majority* of his colleagues, invested with an equal share with himself in the power of government. He seems to have resolved, therefore, to begin by strengthening the hands of his faithful and devoted adherents, the Revolutionary Tribunal, to whom he intended to deliver over his antagonists; and accordingly Couthon, on the 9th June, 1794, proposed a law (drawn up by Robespierre himself) to give the Tribunal additional powers—the most extensive and expeditious. It was to divide itself into four sections for quadruple dispatch—the crimes which

it was to try were multiplied in the vague and expansive definition of *enmity to the People*—the power of sending persons to trial was given to the Convention, to the two committees, to the individual representatives detached on missions, and to the Public Accuser, Fouquier Tinville. If the Tribunal should possess either *material* or *moral* proofs of guilt, it was relieved from the necessity of hearing *witnesses*—and finally, this monstrous law enacted that no *advocates* should be employed, because, forsooth, calumniated patriots would find sufficient defenders in the patriot jurors, and conspirators did not deserve to be indulged with advocates.

Assuredly, of all the iniquitous prostitutions of the name of *law* which the world has ever seen, this was the greatest. His colleagues of the committees were at once exasperated and alarmed —but they did not venture on an open resistance. The debates on this occasion are extremely curious as indicative of the state of parties. On the 22nd Prair., the day of its introduction, some objections were made which Robespierre put down with a high hand—next day Bourdon (de L'Oise) and Merlin (de Douai) carried an explanation of the law 'that the Committees had no right to send members of the Convention to the Revolutionary Tribunal without a previous decree.' On the 24th this explanation was repeated in spite of Ch. De la Croix, Bourdon, and Tallien, who attempted excuses, and Merlin *retracted*. Billaud-Varenne attacked Tallien in a remarkable way, and concluded, '*Mais nous nous tiendrons unis; les conspirateurs périront, et la patrie sera sauvée.*' All explanations and amendments were rejected, amidst the liveliest applause. (*Moniteur*, 14*th June*.) Yet on the 9th Therm., we find *Billaud* joining with Tallien and Bourdon against Robespierre. On the 24th the Convention sends to the Revolutionary Tribunal as accomplices of Lamiral and Cécile Renaud, the persons mentioned in a former page (p. 389). About this time also (23rd Prairial) Robespierre made a sortie against Fouché at the Jacobins, and, in spite of an humble palinode from Fouché, Robespierre attacked him again on 14th July.

The law commonly designated as the *Loi du 22 Prairial*, was passed on the 10th June; and soon after, when their dread of Robespierre was removed, his successors in the Government found it a very convenient accession to their own authority, and resisted an attempt to repeal it. But what Robespierre's *distinct* object was

which pretended to legality—was announced in more naked atrocity, and even put into the form of a substantive motion by his brother, Augustine, who, after complaining of the undue and scandalous scruples which the Convention seemed to entertain about doing justice on the most guilty—*du plus scélérat*—of men, proposed to decree at once—

'The National Convention, considering that Louis, late King of the French, has been condemned (*jugé*) by the Nation, that the representatives of the People would betray their own duty and invade the rights of the People if they were to attempt to question its sovereignty, decrees

'*That Louis Capet shall be brought to the bar to declare his original accomplices; to hear sentence of death pronounced upon him, and to be forthwith conducted to execution.*' *

A considerable tumult occurred at this stage of the debate, but it does not appear whether this extravagant proposition was actually put, or whether, as is most likely, it was smothered in the general confusion. We think it worth notice, as containing the essence of the elder Robespierre's argument and the true exposition of the motives of the whole Jacobin party, who had avowed their intention of executing the King long before he was tried, and who had all along boldly employed the words *trial* and *condemnation* as synonymous and identical.

That crime was hardly consummated when the murderers resumed their internecinal hostilities. Indeed, on the very night of the King's condemnation the Girondins made an attempt to turn it to profit against the Jacobins. 'We have but half done our duty,' cried Gensonné, one of the most sober of his party, 'in punishing the tyrant, if we do not punish the authors of the massacres.' Gensonné may perhaps have made this proposition in the hopes of saving Louis; but such an expedient—a comparison between the King and the *massacreurs*—so false—so odious—revolted common sense and common honesty; and the attempt, however intended, failed miserably, as attempted compromises between fear and falsehood on one side, and consistency and audacity on the other, never fail to do. The King expiated his

* Neither the speech nor motion are in the *Moniteur*, but they were printed separately by order of the Convention. The date is not given, but it must have been on the 10th December, when the *Moniteur* states that several members, and Robespierre junior amongst them, opposed the allowing counsel to the King.

The mania of this poor creature was of so old standing and such extravagant blasphemy as to have attracted the notice of the police as early as 1779, when she was arrested and subjected to an interrogatory in the Bastille, on the 21st of April of that year. This interrogatory, still extant, proves her complete insanity—which had already existed some years, and that she had even then a sect of believers. After a few weeks' treatment in the infirmary of the Bastille, she was removed to a lunatic hospital, whence she was released in 1782; from which time till 1794 nothing is known of her but that she and her little sect still continued to exist in great poverty and profound obscurity. The anarchy of the revolution seems to have encouraged them to more publicity. Her followers increased, and amongst them was an old Carthusian monk, named Dom Gerle, who had been a member of the Constituant Assembly, where he had been remarked as a harmless visionary. It seems that Robespierre had been somehow induced to give this old colleague a certificate of civism; and it also happened that when Catherine was arrested, there was found between the mattresses of her bed a crazy address to Robespierre, whose recent appearance as the apostle of a cloudy deism would naturally enough mingle him with the visions of maniacs of this description.

The Committee of *General Security* which had been for some time jealous of the Committee of Public Safety and especially of Robespierre, heard of these bedlamites—which probably Robespierre himself had never done—and they seized the favourable opportunity of throwing on him all the ridicule and discredit of a crazy fanaticism to which they reckoned that the certificate of Dom Gerle and the address of the '*Mother of God*,' and his recent exhibition in the festival of the Supreme Being would render him obnoxious.* A report was accordingly prepared on this subject, nominally by one Vadier, but really by the lively and sarcastic pen of the celebrated fabricator of reports, Barrère, in which Robespierre was sneeringly alluded to, though not *named*. And to give more consistency and point to the fable, poor Catherine's name of *Theot* was adroitly changed into *Theos*, the Greek for

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* See Payen's Letter to Robespierre, *Pap.* ii. 360. He calls the report 'une farce qui serait *ridicule* si elle n'avait été *funeste*.' The object of this letter is to excite Robespierre to his last conflict with Bourdon and Co.

God. So at least says Vilatte (*Mystères de la Mère de Dieu*), who seems to have been well acquainted with the whole affair—but we think that her name was Grecized before Barrère's report. The whole of this affair was prepared and the report read in the Convention (27 Prairial, 15th June, 1793), without the knowledge of Robespierre. There was no proof whatsoever that he knew anything of his fanatic admirers: the *injury* therefore to his reputation was not great—but the *insult* was. His power was at once too fearful and too fragile to tolerate levity. Its essence was *terror and silence*; and he wished to be spoken of neither *en bien ni en mal*. He had lately made a vigorous complaint of the fulsome adulation with which the Moniteur and some other journals affected to treat him, which he said was offensive to his taste as well as his patriotism, and injurious to his character; he would of course be as little tolerant of sarcasm and calumny.

At this crisis, as at all the former, his prudence seems to have made him desirous of withdrawing from his recent prominence, and of escaping back into the safer individuality under the shade of which he had already accomplished such wonderful successes.

On the 1st July he made a long speech in the Jacobins, recapitulating all the calumnies against him about the Dictatorship, &c., and concludes, 'if they forced him to renounce some of the "functions" he discharged, the right of *Representant* would still be his, and that he would declare *guerre à mort* to all tyrants and conspirators.'*—*Moniteur*, 5th July.

But he must soon have seen that it was too late for him to return to a private station. He stood on an eminence so narrow that he could not turn, and so high that he could not descend. He probably thought (and we believe justly) that he had no alternative but to pursue his perilous path, and he seems to have done so in a spirit of despair, rather than ambition. This would be scarcely credible as the madness of an individual maniac, but that he should have found colleagues and co-operators seems still more astonishing.

On the 4th July Barrère warned the Convention of the danger of premature clemency ('*clémence précoce*') and repeated his

* Elie Lacoste states (*Moniteur*, 29th March, 1795) that Robespierre had a design to suspend the Convention, and defer the whole power to the Committee of Public Safety.

celebrated phrase, '*il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas.*' *— *Moniteur*, 5th July. At this time, and indeed up to the explosion, Barrère seems to have been the ready tool of Robespierre, if he was not rather his rival in cruelty. On the 10th of July he made his celebrated report on the crimes of Lebon at Arras, which he palliated by the famous phrase of '*formes un peu acerbes.*'

About this time occurred a strange intrigue, as yet quite unexplained. After the 14th July, 1794, the streets of Paris were obstructed by what were called '*repas fraternels*,' † which, say Barrère in the Convention and Payen in the Jacobins, 'are multiplying and propagating with a rapidity which does not seem natural. It is a new intrigue of the followers of Hébert and Chaumette.' No doubt this was an intrigue against Robespierre, but its precise object has never been explained. It may have been a device for bringing together a formidable crowd of people, whom the Government could have no legal excuse for dispersing, but which might be suddenly turned against them. All, however, we know about these banquets is, that they alarmed the friends of Robespierre.

And now Fouquier Tinville began to give effect to the law of the 22 *Prairial;* and a conspiracy was invented ‡ the most ridiculous in its pretexts, the bloodiest in its consequences, and the most incomprehensible in its objects, of all that had been hitherto hatched. The miserable prisoners accumulated in the several jails, and particularly in the Luxembourg, were accused of conspiring to organize a body of men to make war on the Convention. Fouquier, on this occasion, caused the *dock* of the tribunal to be enlarged so as to contain sixty culprits at once. He even brought the guillotine into the great hall of the Palais — in the side chambers of which the tribunal held its sittings, like our courts in

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* The finesse of this atrocious pleasantry (for such it is) has not been generally understood. The French call *un revenant* what we call *a ghost;* one that *returns from the dead;* 'but on the contrary,' said Barrère, 'it is the *dead only that do* NOT *return.*'

† There is in the *Pap. Rob.* (i. 333) a most abject letter from Garnier Launay, one of the judges of the Revolutionary Tribunal, begging Robespierre's pardon for having been one of the promoters of these banquets. 'Judge,' he says, imploringly—'judge what I must suffer at the thought of having involuntarily contributed to place those instruments of mischief in the hands of *our* enemies.'

‡ It was not quite a new invention; the same absurd fable had been told as an apology for the September massacre.

Westminster Hall. This, by the reiterated order of the government, he reluctantly removed; but the work of blood was not interrupted. In three days—the 7th, 9th, and 10th of July, 1794—*one hundred and seventy-one* prisoners were immolated for the *impossible* crime of making war on the republic from the depths of their dungeons.

Looking at the state of parties at this moment, and knowing that both sides were, in mutual jealousy and alarm, preparing to devour each other, we know not how to account for this redoubled activity of the tribunal. Fouquier Tinville alleged, and we think proved, at his trial, that though he might have acted too zealously, he never did so *spontaneously*. The Committees, trembling for their own heads, could hardly have ventured on such gratuitous slaughter. We can discover no direct interest that Robespierre could have had in the death of this obscure crowd of innocuous victims. We really have been sometimes tempted to satisfy ourselves with M. Thiers' flippant explanation, that 'they went on murdering, not with any motive or object, but *par l'habitude funeste qu'on en avait contractée*.' But is it not possible that Robespierre, having seceded from the committees, might have hoped to depopularize the remaining members by secretly instigating Fouquier Tinville to mark *their* administration with a violence more odious than *his own*?—and did he mean one day to reproach Collot d'Herbois, Barrère, and Billaud-Varennes, his rival triumvirate, with the ELEVEN HUNDRED* victims who perished subsequently to his secession?—nearly *half* the number of *all* (2635) that had fallen since the first institution of the tribunal. We know not that it has been before remarked how great a proportion of the whole slaughter was perpetrated *after* Robespierre had abdicated his *ostensible* responsibility; yet it is an important fact. This leads us to a few general observations on the *degree* of Robespierre's guilt, as compared with that of his colleagues and of the nation at large.

* The exact number guillotined between the 20th of June, about which time Robespierre seceded, to the 27th of July, the day of his final fall, was *eleven hundred and eight!* Our readers must observe, that all these numbers relate to the single Revolutionary Tribunal of *Paris*. Similar and even more dreadful and extensive massacres were going on simultaneously all over France. The crimes committed in Arras alone rival those of Paris; of these Guffroy has given a summary, which occupies an octavo volume: those of Lyons and Nantes would fill several.

It is very natural that the French nation—when it in some degree recovered its senses—should have been anxious to exculpate itself from all these enormous and unparalleled crimes. The shame and remorse of his colleagues—the party rancour of his adversaries—and the national vanity of all, readily combined to load the memory of ROBESPIERRE with the accumulated and undivided guilt, and concurred in representing him as the head of a *small faction* which by some deplorable accidents had been enabled to dictate their code of blood to a reluctant and indignant people; in short, as we noticed in the outset, he is made the *scapegoat* of the Revolution. Every Frenchman has an interest in adopting this exculpatory hypothesis; and even the more recent English writers have been too apt, instead of going back to the original and contemporaneous sources of information, to content themselves with compiling from the compilations of the French—*all* of them prejudiced on this subject, and some of them—M. Thiers, for instance—of no individual authority whatsoever. But is it not evident that, as to the French *people*, such excuses would be as inadequate in reason as they are false in fact? Would the national character be much mended, if we were to admit that they were such dastards as to allow, from sheer cowardice, a *handful* of villains to commit such crimes, and to send to one execution, in one day, a greater number of persons than—if we believe these apologetical historians—Robespierre's whole faction contained? Robespierre was neither a Cromwell nor a Buonaparte. His power was not founded on an irresistible military force. *His force was the* PEOPLE *itself.* He was really their child and champion, the incarnate type of *Public Opinion**—which, in revolutionary times, only means the *opinion* of the most violent of the *Public.* That the predisposition of Robespierre's personal character may have coincided with the bloody extravagances of the times we do not deny; but we are satisfied that the bloody extravagances of the times outran his predisposition. No doubt there were in the French people millions of poor persecuted *Royalists and Christians*, who deplored and detested—even independently of their own personal sufferings—this frightful system: perhaps even it might be truly said that a *numerical* majority of the nation, including

* La Révolution incarnée c'est Robespierre; avec son horrible bonne foi, sa naïveté de sang, et sa conscience *pure* et *cruelle.*—*Nodier.*

women and children, was entirely innocent; but, that the great and predominant mass—which the republican constitution designated as *active citizens*, and which, politically and practically, constituted the *nation*—concurred zealously—furiously—in all the worst revolutionary extremities, cannot be denied—and France can no more divest herself of a part in the guilt of Robespierre than in the glories of Napoleon: in truth she had a more immediate and *direct* share in the guilt than in the glory.

The truth of this view of the case is strongly confirmed, indeed we may say placed beyond question, by the circumstances that produced and accompanied his fall. It was not as a man of blood that the parties most immediately active in his overthrow—the Collots, Billauds, Barrères, Talliens, Fouchés, &c.—attacked him. They were all as deep and each personally deeper in blood than Robespierre, and when they took his head to save their own, they neither professed nor intended any change in the system of slaughter in which they had been not merely associates but instigators, and meant to be his successors and imitators. In the long and tumultuous struggle of the 8th and 9th Thermidor, he was not once reproached with those more atrocious crimes, the wholesale massacres, the thousands of murders which render his name execrable to all posterity! On the contrary, he was accused of the very opposite offence of having countenanced the clemency of Camille Desmoulins and of having deserted the energetic principles of Marat.*

One of the most violent of his assailants, Vadier, in the height of the storm, accused him 'of having endeavoured to save from the scaffold the *enemies of the people*, and of having officiously interfered with Fouquier Tinville to *suspend the execution of conspirators!*'

* When in the stormy debate of the 8th Therm. Freron moved that thenceforward the committee should not have the power of arresting members of the Convention, Billaud, who was willing that Robespierre should be put to death, but not that the surviving committee should lose the power of putting their other antagonists to death, opposed and stifled the proposition.—*Montjoye*, p. 192. See also Fouquier's defence of himself in the Essay on the Revolutionary Tribunals. Thiers says under the head of an affair, of which he as usual omits the date, but which we know occurred on the 9th July, that it was evident that the whole committee wished to maintain the reign of terror. Robespierre, Couthon, Billaud, Collot d'Herbois, Vadier, Vaumar, however divided as to their own prerogative, or as to the number and names of the colleagues to be sacrificed, were agreed on the principle of exterminating all those who were an obstacle to the revolution.—Vol. vi., p. 300, ed. 1828.

But a more important, because more solemn and deliberate, announcement of the views of the new Government is given in the report made in its name by Barrère after Robespierre's execution, in which he repudiated (as he had done less emphatically a few days before) '*une clémence précoce*,'—a premature clemency:

'Aristocrats,' says the Report, 'in disguise began to talk of indulgence, as if the revolutionary action of the Government had not received fresh force—had not increased an hundredfold by the new spirit and energy which this appeal to the people has given to the Convention and the Committees.

'Indulgence, forsooth! We might have some for involuntary errors—but the manœuvres of the aristocrats are felonies, and their errors crimes.

'The Convention will illustrate its victory by a more vigorous war against every kind of prejudice—against every individual ambition.'—*Moniteur*, 12 Therm. (30 July), 1794.

But the Thermidorian reign belongs to another page of history.

It cannot be doubted that, though the Thermidorians had concurred in the sacrifice of Danton, on or immediately after that event, began the conspiracy against Robespierre's personal authority. It happened on the 5th April. By the beginning of June the opposition to him in the Committees must have attained a formidable consistency, for it exhibited itself, as he tells us, at the great fête of the 8th June, and so offensively in the Committee about the 13th or 14th, that he never again appeared there. The latter scene occurred, it seems, in the discussion of the proposed prosecution against Catherine Theos. 'Robespierre,' says Thiers, 'strongly opposed it—the discussion became extremely warm; he was personally insulted and over-voted, and retired *shedding tears of vexation*' (*pleurant de rage*).* Now their

* We know not where M. Thiers has found this *scène larmoyante*, but Lamartine copies it, with a little additional embroidery. 'The day before Elie Lacoste was to make his report on the affair of Cécile Renaud, Vadier came to the committee and told Robespierre that he would next day make *his* report also on an affair connected with this, in which he should propose the indictment of the St. Amaranthe family. "You will do no such thing," said Robespierre, imperiously. "I will," says Vadier; "I have abundance of evidence." "Evidence or no," replied Robespierre, "if you do so I shall attack you." "You are a tyrant," exclaimed Vadier. "Oh, I am a tyrant!" cried Robespierre, *scarcely able to restrain* his tears of indignation that swelled his eyes; "well, I shall release you from my tyranny. I shall come here no more." And with these words he retired and never reappeared.' I do not think it worth while to observe on the various discrepancies of these two stories, as I do not see what authority there is for the details of either.

report against Catherine Theos was made in the Convention on the 15th June, and therefore this scene must have been a day or two earlier. The important point, however, is certain that for *six weeks* prior to his fall Robespierre had not in person appeared at the Committee, and that he was represented there by Couthon alone, St. Just being on a mission to the army of the North, from which he was recalled by a hasty summons from Robespierre, when he saw that the crisis was at hand, and he arrived in Paris only on the evening of the 7th Thermidor, in time only to be *in at the death*. Yet there are some curious indications that Robespierre did not choose to promulgate his resentment or retirement—he felt, we suppose, as he very naturally might, that the publication of any such difference would lessen his authority and perhaps endanger his person; and certainly, to the public eye, he maintained the whole height of his dictatorial position. He was, indeed, at open war with Bourdon, Dubois-Crancé, Tallien, and Fouché, and we suspect that it was rather about them than about Catherine Theos or Madame Ste. Amaranthe, that the real contention arose. But those men were not members of the Committees, and Robespierre still spoke and ruled with all the authority of the leading member of the Government. The law of the 22 *Prairial*, the very strongest instance of his dictatorial power, was passed on the 10th June. The attempt made on the 11th and 12th by Bourdon and Martin to modify it proved at once the alarm it excited in the Convention and the intimidation exercised by the Committee of Public Safety. On the latter day, Robespierre, in the name of the Committee, menaced the opponents, and especially Bourdon, with public vengeance; and, on this occasion, he exclaimed, 'The *Committee and the Mountain* are one and the same,' and went on to designate Bourdon as a *scélérat*, whose consciousness of guilt had betrayed itself in this opposition to the decree. This was the first open breach with that party, and affords no trace of any quarrel with the Committee. On the 11th he attacked Fouché and Dubois-Crancé in the Jacobins, and on the 12th Bourdon and Tallien in the Convention, and still in the name of the Committee. On the 21st June he makes one of his most celebrated speeches to the Jacobins, in reply to the Duke of York's protest against the order of no quarter; and in this he again speaks as belonging to the Committee, and notices as a calumny of the enemy, that there are any differences between its members.

On the 24th, he repels an attack on Lebon, as an attack on the *Government.* On the 1st of July he exhorts the Jacobins to have confidence in the patriotism and virtues of the members of the Committee. On the 9th July he makes a long speech against divisions in the Convention, and exposes the artifice that would make individual members believe that they were proscribed by the Committee of Public Safety. Besides these evidences from the debates of the Club and the Convention, we find from some decrees on indifferent subjects that have happened to be preserved, that Robespierre acted in the Committee and signed its arrêtés on the 15th and 28th June, and on the 1st July.

These latter dates are certainly irreconcilable with the date that he and his friends as well as his accusers assign to his quitting the Committee, and can only be explained by supposing either that he may have given two or three accidental attendances, or, which is more probable, that the decrees had been prepared, while he was still attending, with blank dates, which were afterwards filled up with the date of promulgation. Irregularities of this sort, even on more important subjects, were very frequent.

But the stupendous tragedy is arrived at its last act—the THREE GREAT DAYS of 1794, called in the annals of the Revolution, the eighth, NINTH, and tenth Thermidor, but in our Calendar the 26th, 27th, and 28th of July, a curious coincidence with the later THREE GREAT DAYS of the July Revolution; and when we recollect another 28th July again, so murderously marked in the calendar of crime by the Fieschi attempt, we cannot refrain from exclaiming, What a bloody anniversary that has been, that same 28th July—all, at long intervals, but by indisputable connexion derived from the original massacres of July, 1789!

The final conflict may be said to have commenced on the 3rd July by a small circumstance heretofore entirely overlooked, but which, we have no doubt, hastened the catastrophe. Vilatte, a juror of the Revolutionary Tribunal, a creature of Robespierre and Barrère, tells us in his Memoirs, that he had made from Barrère's dictation a list of those whom Robespierre intended to sacrifice. He adds, that a day or two after he had made this list, he was arrested by order of the Committee of General Security in the Palace of the Tuileries, where Barrère had given him a charming apartment in the Pavillion de Flore, overlooking the garden,

and where Robespierre had breakfasted with him on the important morning of the Fête de l'Etre Suprême. On his arrest this fatal list was, he says, found on his desk. While this fellow was in prison, and under the hatchet of the contending parties, he wrote, and subsequently published under the title of *Causes secrètes de la Révolution du 9 Thermidor*, an apology for his conduct and a plea for his own neck, which all subsequent writers have adopted, as if, in all its parts, a tract worthy of acceptation. It has undoubtedly some truths, but so handled and discoloured for his own special objects, that we have no confidence in any, and would easily disprove many of its details, but it still affords some glimpses of truth.

The Memoirs do not tell us either the motive or the date of his arrest, but we gather from his hints that he was looked upon as a confidant of Robespierre's, and we find in the Procès Fouquier, that the precise date of his arrest was the 3rd Thermidor, and it is most probable that this list thus falling into the hands of the Committee of General Security, some of whose members it included, may have awakened both parties to the urgency of the crisis and precipitated the catastrophe.

The momentous six weeks that elapsed between the *Fête de l'Etre Suprème* and the fall of Robespierre was a period of such obscure intrigue, such fearful apprehension, and such general terror, that men were afraid to speak or even to whisper, much more to write. Nothing was published. In the enormous collections of revolutionary pamphlets, we find this interval almost a blank. After the fall of Robespierre, three of his subaltern instruments, Vilatte, Senart, and Taschereau, who had all been arrested in one way or another as his accomplices, wrote, while in prison, and in terror of the Thermidorians, accounts of their share in the crisis, which give some details as to the greater personages; but they are, as might be expected, scanty, obscure, equivocating, and inconsistent. We have little faith in any of the details given by men confessedly of infamous character, and who were only endeavouring to excuse themselves and to escape from the general odium and imminent danger in which they were involved. But from the real parties—the more influential leaders, the actual personages of this terrible drama — we have nothing more than what the Moniteur tells us of their appearance on the public scene of the

Convention; and as the victorious party got immediate possession of the Moniteur, even its reports of the proceedings are evidently discoloured by exaggerated violence against the defeated party, and by an equally partial and prejudiced representation of their own motives and conduct. The conflict began on the morning of the 8th Thermidor (26th July, 1794), by a long and elaborate speech from Robespierre, of which, as it does not appear in the Moniteur, and as it contains his own defence, and his accusations against his antagonists, we think our readers will approve of our extracting some of the more important passages.

He began by representing himself as a man 'persecuted by a system of terror and calumny,' and he describes his opponents as 'tyrants, men of blood, oppressors of patriots,' in exactly the same vocabulary of reproach that they afterwards employed against him. He then, speaking in the plural number, proceeds to defend the earlier proceedings of both the Committees, but especially of that of Public Safety, and repels the charge of severity by reminding Convention that

'*We* only charged, but it was the Convention that condemned. The guilty complain of our rigour—the country more justly complains of our weakness. And who are the men that we are blamed for having denounced? Who but the Héberts, the Dantons, the Chabots, the Lacroix? Is it the memory of these conspirators that our accusers venture to defend? Is it the death of those conspirators that they will attempt to avenge? If we are accused of having denounced some traitors—then, let rather the Convention be accused that indicted them—let rather the law be accused that convicted them—let rather the nation at large be accused that has applauded and sanctioned their punishment.'

This was conclusive *ad homines;* but he then proceeds to complain that not only those acts of justice but other imaginary measures of severity should be attributed to him personally.

'Such, however, is the ground of those projects of *dictatorship* and those designs against the national representation, imputed at first to the Committee of Public Safety in general, and now all of a sudden, by I know not what fatality, transferred to one member of it. Strange project of an individual man to persuade the National Convention to cut its own throat with its own hands, in order to open to that individual the road to absolute power! Others will see the ridicule of such a charge. I must be permitted to feel only its atrocity. The monsters who charge me with such insanity are the

real cut-throats who meditate the sacrifice of all the friends of their country: let these monsters justify, if they can, their own conduct at the bar of public opinion, but they will not succeed in depriving me* of the esteem and confidence of the National Convention, the most glorious prize that can reward the labours of a public man, which I have obtained neither by surprise nor usurpation, but which my services have deserved and won. To become an object of terror in the eyes of those that one revered, of those that one loves, would be to a man of honour and of feeling the deepest affliction; to endeavour to inflict it is the greatest of crimes, and I invoke all your indignation against the atrocious manœuvres that are employed to continue these extravagant calumnies.'

He then proceeds to exculpate the recent proceedings of both the Committees. He mentions two or three subaltern names, such as Cambon, Malarme, Ramol; to others, such as Barrère, Vadier, Billaud, he alludes in a way that neither the parties accused nor the evidence could be misunderstood, and enumerates the various crimes of his enemies, committed with the pernicious object of making them pass for his—acts of general oppression—the employment of spies to find excuses for the most unjust arrests—a system of finance—taxes and confiscations which threatened the fortunes of innumerable families of limited means—suspending the dividends of the public debt and the payments of public salaries—motions calculated to terrify all that had been either nobles or clergy. They accused him, he adds, of the most opposite offences, of being an ultra-revolutionist and an ultra-moderate; on the one hand of immolating the *Mountain*, and on the other, of persecuting the sixty-two deputies under detention, which he was so far from doing that he had risked his popularity to protect them.

'They call me *Tyrant*. If I were one, they would grovel at my feet. I would gorge them with gold and they would be grateful. When the victims of their perfidy complain—they excuse themselves by saying, *Robespierre will have it so*. To the nobles they say, *'Tis he alone that prosecutes you*. To the higher patriots they say, *'Tis because Robespierre protects the nobles*. To the clergy they say, *'Tis he that prosecutes you*. To the fanatics they say, *'Tis he that has destroyed religion*. All the grievances which I have in vain endeavoured to redress are still imputed to me—*'Tis he that has done it all*—or *'tis he that will not prevent it—your fate is in his hands alone*. Spies are hired and distri-

* There is some obscurity here from the imperfect state of the MS., but we have given the meaning of the context.

buted in our public places to propagate these calumnies. You see them at the sittings of the Revolutionary Tribunal. You find them round the scaffold when the enemies of the country expiate their crimes—you hear them saying, *These are the unhappy victims of Robespierre.* They, above all, strive to prove that the Revolutionary Tribunal is a *tribunal of blood*, created and guided by me alone, not merely for the sacrifice of the innocent—but, in order to enlist against me enemies of all classes, they make the very punishment of the guilty my personal act. When a deputy is released in a mission to a department, they tell him that it is I that recall him. Obliging persons were found to attribute to me more good than I have done in order to impute to me mischiefs in which I had no hand. They kindly repeated to my colleagues everything that I happened to say, and, above all, everything that I did not say. If any measure of the Government was likely to displease any one, it was I who did all—exacted all—commanded all! 'Twas never to be forgotten that I was the dictator.

'You will ask who are the authors of this system of calumny—I answer, in the first place—the Duke of York—Mr. Pitt, and all the tyrants who are in arms against us. But who next? . . . . . Ah, I dare not name them at this moment and in this place—I cannot bring myself to a resolution to tear away altogether the veil that covers this profound mystery of iniquity.'

The repeated introduction of the Duke of York, Mr. Pitt, and King George, as active parties in the struggle between these tigers, seems at first sight too absurd for serious notice; but it has a latent value—it proves that they had but scanty grounds for their charges against each other when they were reduced to the *pis-aller* of arraigning one another, not for their own proceedings, but as the hired accomplices of the English Government. At the acts of his assailant Robespierre stops short.... because we are satisfied that he had nothing to tell but what everybody knew, though he least of any was willing to tell—that they were bidding at a popular auction for each other's heads. Indeed in the whole of this vital debate nothing is more remarkable than the copious reciprocity of reproaches, and absence of anything like facts to support them. Robespierre's speech might almost have been spoken by Bourdon, and Bourdon's by Robespierre. However different the men, the words were the same. They rang the changes on *calumny*, *corruption*, *crime*, *terror* — *cowards*, *traitors*, *tyrants*, *despots* — *Sylla*, *Verres*, *Clodius*, and *Catiline* — with mutual rancour and indisputable truth. It is no wonder that they evaded

the production of *facts*, any one of which, by whomsoever produced, would have been met by a terrible *tu quoque*.

In Robespierre's speech, however, there are several passages which, though vague and desultory, afford, collectively, his views of the origin and object of the struggle. He charges the Committee of General Security with an invidious antagonism to the Committee of Public Safety, and with endeavouring to depopularize revolutionary institutions, and especially the Revolutionary Tribunal, by driving it to excessive severities:—

'They abuse it to destroy it. There are, no doubt, in that Committee men whose civic virtues it is impossible not to appreciate; but that is an additional reason for repressing abuses committed without their knowledge by subaltern agents—royalists, ex-nobles, emigrants perhaps, whom we see all of a sudden transformed into revolutionists and instruments of the Committee of General Security, to wreak their own private vengeances on the friends of the people and the founders of the republic. Inoffensive and inconsiderable individuals are tormented, and patriots are every day cast into dungeons. Have they not secretly handed about odious lists in which certain members of the Convention were designated as victims? Has not this imposture been propagated with such combined artifice and audacity that a great number of members have not ventured to sleep in their own residences?'

Here are, we have little doubt, allusions to the arrest of the 'inoffensive and inconsiderable' Vilatte, and to the seizure and exposure of his list of victims. On the prosecution against Dom Gerle and Catherine Theos he expatiates as a branch of the grand conspiracy, in which calumny, anarchy, and atheism had combined against him ever since the speech in which he had proposed the decree of the 18 *Floréal* (7th May), recognizing an *Etre Suprême;* 'from that epoch he dates the assassinations attempted against him, and the calumnies more criminal than assassinations.' We are tempted to give our readers an idea of the religion of which Robespierre professed himself the apostle and the martyr, and a specimen of what he no doubt thought the highest style of his eloquence in an apostrophe to his audience concerning that decree and the *fête* that followed it:—

'Immortal thanks to the Convention for that decree! which is itself a revolution, and has saved the country. You have stricken with the same blow atheism and priestly despotism! You have

advanced by half a century the last hour of all tyrants! You have won over to the Revolution every pure and generous heart! You have exhibited it in all the splendour of a celestial beauty! O day for ever fortunate! When the French people rose altogether to offer to the Author of Nature the only homage worthy of him, what a touching assemblage was there of all the objects that can fascinate the eyes or attract the hearts of men! O honoured old age! O generous and ardent youth! O pure and playful joy of childhood! O delicious tears of maternal fondness! O divine influences of innocence and beauty! O the majesty of a great people, happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of its own strength and glory and virtue! Being of Beings, was the day on which the universe came forth from your creative and almighty hands brighter or more acceptable to your eyes than that recent day when the first People of the world, bursting the bonds of crime and of error, appeared before you, worthy of thy favour and of its own destinies?'

This tirade was not a mere rhetorical declamation, whatever we may think of its good taste; it was artfully calculated as a contrast to the ignoble and ridiculous farce which had been got up by his opponents:—

'Will it be believed,' he exclaimed, 'than even in that auspicious moment of public joy there were men to be found who replied to the acclamations of a grateful people by looks of rage and expressions of contempt? Will it be believed that the President of the Assembly, addressing the assembled Nation, was insulted by these men, and that these men should be representatives of the People?

'*That single fact is the clue to all that has followed*—the first step towards degrading the great principle you had inaugurated, and blotting out the tranquillizing memory of that national solemnity. Such was the character and the motive of the ridiculous importance given to the mystical and puerile farce that is called the affair of Catherine Theos.'

He then, still more artfully, and in a better style, endeavours to connect his present antagonists, the Fouchés, &c. (who had inscribed over the cemeteries that '*Death was an eternal sleep*'), with Chaumette, &c., the atheist faction, executed in the preceding April:—

'No Chaumette—no Fouché! "*Death is not an eternal sleep.*" The French people will not submit to a desperate and desolating doctrine that covers nature itself with a funereal shroud—that deprives virtue of hope, and misfortune of consolation, and insults even death itself. No; we will efface from our tombs your sacrilegious epitaph, and

replace it with the consolatory truth, DEATH IS THE BEGINNING OF IMMORTALITY.'

On the subject of the imputed dictatorship he brings prominently forward his own secession: —

'In answer to the attempt to make me responsible for all the recent operations of the Committee of General Security, all the errors of the constituted authorities—nay, of all the crimes of my enemies—I need only say, that for six weeks past the violence of calumny, the want of power alike to do good or to prevent evil, forced me to abandon altogether the functions of member of the Committee of Public Safety. In doing so, I had no other motives than my duty to myself and my country. I prefer the character of a representative of the people to that of member of the Committee; and I place above all other titles those of a free man and a French citizen.

'But, after all, and whatever may be said of my dictatorship, there are at least six weeks that it has expired, and that I have had no kind of share or influence in the government. Well, are the patriots better protected? Is faction less audacious? Is the country happier? But it is not enough that they have forced me to deliver them from an inconvenient observer—my very existence is a subject of alarm, and they had meditated in darkness, and without the knowledge of the colleagues, a design of depriving me of the power of defending the people—*that is, of my life.* Oh, I shall resign it to them without a regret! Why should I wish to live under a system where intrigue triumphs for ever over truth, where justice is a lie, where the basest passions and the most ridiculous terrors supersede in men's hearts the most sacred duties? Why should I regret to escape from the eternal torture of seeing this horrible succession of traitors, who, concealing the turpitude of their souls under the veil of virtue, and *even of friendship*, will leave posterity in doubt which was the greater, their cowardice or their crimes?'

Montjoye, with his usual blind prejudice, treats this speech with the utmost contempt, as a wretched declamation, mortally tedious, and so empty and insignificant that he cannot, as he says, find even a phrase worthy of notice.* Diffuse, it certainly is, and inconsistent in argument, but these defects were partly designed and

* Lamartine, on the other hand, pronounces it to be a grand oration, and profoundly studied — comprehensive, philosophical impassioned, and written with the pen of Tacitus! This seems nearly as much exaggerated as Montjoye's contempt. Lamartine adds several circumstances of Robespierre's private and domestic life in the first week of Thermidor, which would be interesting if they were authenticated, but he gives no authority. I suspect he can only have found them in some such factitious Memoirs as I have alluded to in former pages.—1855.

partly inevitable—he was afraid of speaking too plain as to his ulterior objects, and was embarrassed to distinguish what he presented as his own merits from what he called crimes in his opponents. He seems deficient in movement and energy because he was forced to conceal his dagger under his cloak; but it was not on that account less formidable — the vagueness and obscurity deepened perhaps the awful impression on an auditory in whose minds the greatest as well as the meanest motives were at work —ambition and corruption, hope and hatred, fanaticism and cowardice. But the question at issue could not be misunderstood. No one, at least of the leaders, could have doubted that the speech was a *capital* indictment, and that the vote they were to give was an inevitable sentence of death on one party or the other. The omission of it in the Moniteur leaves us in doubt as to its visible effect on the Assembly. Thiers says that it was received with a sullen and ominous silence: as usual, he gives no authority, and we suspect that he is mistaken—led astray by the report of it subsequently published in a separate shape, in which, as was the practice in all similar reports, the expressions of feeling, so frequently noted in the current publications of the debates, are wholly omitted. So that when Thiers turned from the Moniteur's animated description of the rest of the debate to the dry pamphlet report, he was struck with the absence of all marks of approbation, and concluded too hastily that it had received none.* We shall see presently that this is very unlikely.

As soon as Robespierre had concluded, Lecointre proposed that it should be printed—a mark of approbation which the Convention usually bestowed on all important occasions. Thiers says that Lecointre was one of Robespierre's 'most energetic enemies,' but he gives no authority,† nor does he attempt to explain (though it

* Lamartine, deceived as I think, by the circumstance mentioned in the text, also states that it was received in silence —but he, more consistently with the known facts, supposes it was the silence of respect and assent.—1855.

† I find no evidence of any such enmity—on the contrary, he seems to have been an early and constant friend of Robespierre (see *Défenseur*, Nos. 2, 3, and 5), and after his fall distinguished himself by his inveterate hostility to Barrère, Billaud, Collot, &c.—the men who, by opposing this very motion of the 8th Thermidor, had occasioned that fall, and we find that Barrère retaliated Lecointre's attacks by an enumeration of his *panegyrics* on Robespierre. But he was a strange, violent man, and supposed to be 'crazy—proposing one 'day the contrary of what he had advo- 'cated the day before, defending those 'he had attacked, attacking those he 'had defended.'—*Biog. Conventionnelle.* So that it is possible that he may have occasionally opposed Robespierre, but there seems no kind of evidence that he acted in concert with his enemies on

is clear he saw the difficulty) why an 'energetic enemy' should make a motion notoriously complimentary, and which in this case was far more important than an ordinary compliment, for it implied, *primâ facie* at least, the acquiescence of the Convention at large in Robespierre's views. Lecointre's motion had passed, or was about to pass, unanimously (there is some confusion in the report, as there probably was in the actual debate), when Bourdon, one of the denounced, seeing its full consequences, but not venturing on an open negative, proposed that the speech should be referred to the previous examination of the two Committees of Government. The temper in which the Convention received this proposition is not specified, but it induced Couthon to take a bold step in advance of Lecointre's, by moving, by way of rider, that the speech should be not only printed, but officially distributed to the 40,000 communes of the republic. This also was decreed, and still with apparent unanimity. But the Thermidorians, as the anti-Robespierrians are historically called, saw that this would enlist not merely the Convention but the whole population of France against them; and that bolder measures were necessary even to a chance of escape. Vadier and Cambon, who had been denounced by name, claimed from the justice of the Assembly to be heard in reply to the charges against them; which they did with temper and moderation, till, at the conclusion of his explanation, Cambon's warm temper led him to add, 'It is time to tell the whole truth—there is one man who paralyses the Convention; it is the very man who has made this speech—Robespierre.'

This *sortie*, defensively and temperately introduced, but concluding with a direct and menacing denouncement of the one formidable name of which all France, and, above all, the Convention, had so long stood in silent awe, and followed by that *applause* which Robespierre himself had hitherto engrossed, was a strong symptom that the spell was already broken. The cautious Moniteur only says, *on applaudit*, but it seems to have disconcerted Robespierre to a degree that leads us to conclude that the aspect of the Assembly must have been more formidable than it appears in the report. He replied to Cambon feebly, apologetically, and,

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the 8th Thermidor. Lamartine is of my opinion, for he says that Lecointre's motion meant the adoption of Robespierre's speech. Lecointre had been a linendraper at Versailles, and was, like Robespierre, particularly *acharné* against the queen.

what was worse, meanly. He protested that he had not inculpated Cambon, but had only suggested that the result of his measures had not answered his *intentions*, which he had not impugned. This was an obvious untruth, for he had called him by name a '*fripon connu.*' Such scandalous tergiversation seems to have had the natural effect of shaming his friends and inspiriting his enemies. In the ensuing debate not one voice was raised in his behalf; even Couthon himself only spoke to excuse, in a tone equally feeble, his own motion; while Bourdon, Panis, Charlier, Bentabolle, Amar, Thercon, and Bréard—men who had all been hitherto Robespierre's intimate partners in guilt, his tools in the Committees, his organs and advocates in the Assembly, now rose against him with increasing boldness and effect. The decree for the printing was revoked, and that for referring the speech to the Committees was carried; but this last affront Robespierre had in his own hands the power of defeating. 'What!' he exclaimed, 'I have had the courage to lay before the Convention at large the truths that I thought necessary to the safety of my country, and it is proposed to refer my speech to the examination of the very Committees that I have accused!' And he refused to give a copy. This looks spirited, but it wanted the essential merit of consistency, for he had but just before protested that he had not meant to attack the Committees. This bravado, therefore, additionally indisposed his hearers; and the conflict would probably have been brought to a decisive issue that day, but that Barrère, who was certainly deeply and justly offended with Robespierre,* but was still endeavouring to keep well with both parties, interrupted the angry debate with one of his *fanfaron* reports of the victories of the armies and the bright destinies of the republic, which he said would gloriously triumph over '*every class of intriguers, disunionists, alarmists, exaggerators, traitors, and counter-revolutionists*'—terms that he might safely use, for they were those with

* He had alluded in his speech to Barrère's reports to the Convention, called in contempt of their levity, inaccuracy, and extravagance, *carmagnoles*. 'They talk to you of our victories with an academic levity, as if they cost our heroes neither toil nor blood—announced with less pomp, they would have appeared truer and greater;—it is not by rhetorical phrases, by philanthropic farces, that the success of the republic can be insured. * * * *Truth is better than epigrams.*' Before Robespierre ventured on this bitter criticism he must have been convinced that Barrère had joined his enemies, and yet it was only three days before (on the 5th) that Barrère had pronounced, in one of his carmagnoles, a most elaborate and glowing panegyric on Robespierre.

which the contending parties mutually characterised each other. This closed that day's debate to the advantage of the Thermidorians, while Robespierre hastened to the Jacobins, and there read his speech amidst the enthusiastic applause of the club and its galleries; but there is reason to suppose little of confidence and spirit on his own part.

Meanwhile, in the course of the 8th, St. Just, whom Robespierre had summoned to the rescue, arrived post-haste from the army. He attended the evening sitting of the Committee, and, as he told the Convention, which was prolonged through the night till five o'clock in the following morning, in attempts, on his part, to accommodate differences, towards which he met no encouragement. It was, however, agreed that he should draw up a report to be read next day to the Convention, but to be previously communicated to the Committees. It is not stated, and probably was not settled, what the tone or even the subject of the report was to be. The Thermidorians had perhaps not lost all hope of winning over St. Just, and would have been glad if a report by him could have countenanced their proceedings. St. Just had promised to submit his report to his colleagues before 11 A.M., but did not keep his promise of communicating it—nor, indeed, was it possible to do so, for he left them at half-past five, and the Convention met at nine, so that he had not even time to finish it, and the manuscript with which he ascended the tribune next morning was a confused, ill-digested, and inconclusive tirade, chiefly directed against Collot d'Herbois and Billaud de Varennes, whom he accused of having conspired to depreciate, insult, and even sacrifice Robespierre. In proof of this the speech stated that in a short visit which he had some weeks before made from the army to Paris, he had brought the Committee together to endeavour to reconcile the differences which even then existed. He found it impossible. Billaud was at once audacious and irresolute, violent and treacherous:—

'Billaud announced his design in broken sentences. Now he would talk of a new "*Pisistratus*"—then of "*dangers*." Occasionally he seemed to grow bolder when he was listened to; but, again, his final resolution would expire on his lips. One [Robespierre] whom in his absence he called *Pisistratus*, he would next day call his friend. His features, though he strove to compose them, betrayed his sinister feelings. A member of the Committee [Vadier, no

doubt] was put forward to insult Robespierre, and drive him to some indiscretion of which his enemies might take advantage and turn to his ruin.'

In these tracasseries St. Just endeavoured to act as a mediator, and David seconded him, and Billaud, seeming to be convinced and reconciled, said to Robespierre, 'We are all your friends. We have always acted together.' 'This hypocrisy,' says St. Just, 'made my blood boil—for I knew that the day before he had designated him as *Pisistratus*, and had actually drawn up an act of accusation against him.' He then proceeded to a mere personal defence of Robespierre, who was driven from the Committee by the bitter insults of the two or three members who, from the accidental absence of their colleagues, had, in fact, become masters of the Committee. 'In the speech which Robespierre pronounced yesterday,' says his advocate, 'I admit that he did explain his case as clearly as might be—but, in truth, he did not know it. He is even now not aware of the full extent of the prosecution directed against him; he knows only his misfortune, and if there be anything in his speech to require excuse, his late absence from the Committees of Government, and the bitterness of his soul at the treatment he has received, will sufficiently afford it.' St. Just meant to conclude with a motion which is remarkable only for its vague and, as we think, incomprehensible inanity—

'The Convention decrees that the institutions which *will* be forthwith drawn up *shall* present the means by which the Government, while losing nothing of its revolutionary action, *shall* not tend to arbitrary power, nor to favour individual ambition, nor to oppress or usurp the national representation.'

It is difficult to guess what practical advantage in that extreme crisis either St. Just or his prompter could have expected from a speech which was weak without being conciliatory, which admitted Robespierre to stand in need of apology—charged their most formidable antagonist with little more than ill manners and ill humour, and perorated with such a lame and impotent conclusion. Our belief is that from the moment that Cambon had pronounced his name in a tone of censure, confirmed by the applause of the audience, Robespierre's spirit had quailed—that St. Just's arrival brought neither strength nor courage to his councils of the night or the movements of the morning, and that the whole party was paralysed

at finding their projects of proscription anticipated and retaliated. We think we trace in St. Just's speech some advances towards a parley and a truce, but whatever was its design it was not destined to be even heard. On the morning of the 9th Thermidor—Sunday, the 27th July, 1794—St. Just appeared in the tribune of the Convention, and began his speech, but had hardly got through the first paragraph of his manuscript when he was irregularly interrupted by Tallien and Billaud; and when Robespierre endeavoured to be heard to order, even he was silenced with cries of '*A bas le tyran.*' That cry was itself the victory! In vain did Robespierre make the most strenuous efforts to be heard in reply: he was overpowered by the tumult. His enemies still dreaded his eloquence and his influence, and hurried on with great violence to a vote for his immediate arrest. We need not pursue the details of that long and tumultuous sitting, which are given in the Moniteur with more accuracy and fairness than might be expected, and have been followed by all subsequent writers. One observation, however, we think worth adding—as we do not remember to have seen it made before—that so suddenly and so completely was Robespierre isolated and abandoned in that assembly in which twenty-four hours before he was almost worshipped, and so terror-stricken was his still numerous party in the debate of the 8th Thermidor, no voice, save that of his first accomplice, Couthon, was raised in his behalf, and in that of the 9th—*not one!* The proposition for arresting him was made by two obscure regicides, never heard of, we may almost say, before or since—Loseau and Louchet *—and voted, as it seemed, with enthusiastic unanimity. It can hardly be thought an exception to this general dereliction, that, after his arrest was voted, his brother demanded '*as he had shared his virtues*, to share his fate,' and that Lebas, who had married one of Duplay's daughters, and who had been himself already denounced, should have anticipated the coming decree by a similar offer.

But besides the report in the Moniteur there was another of 140 closely printed pages, prepared by a committee named by the

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* The sanguinary spirit of the party that rose on this occasion against Robespierre is strikingly exemplified by the fact, that just three weeks after his fall on the 19th August this same Louchet declared that the only salvation for the republic was to maintain *Terror* as the *order of the day.*' The disapprobation of the Assembly, however, forced him to retract it.—*Mon.*

Convention *ad hoc*, and presented by its chairman, Charles Duval. It was, however, as Courtois informs us, rejected for its inaccuracy, but he adds that it nevertheless contains '*des détails extrêmement précieux.*' Its bias against Robespierre is evident, and the author's personal character inspires little confidence. He was a furious Jacobin, and author of a *Journal des Hommes Libres*, but so ferocious as to be commonly called the *Journal des Tigres*, and 'after having been' (says the *Biographie Conventionnelle*) 'an idolatrous worshipper of Robespierre, turned round after his fall and trampled on his carcass.' * Without agreeing with Courtois that its details are extremely precious, we think that those which relate to Robespierre personally are curious, and, *valeant quantum*, so connected with our biography as to justify our making copious extracts from the rare pamphlet, in which only they are to be found. The contemporaneous evidence of an eye-witness is always valuable, whatever allowance we may have to make for his prejudice and partiality.

'*Sitting of the 9th Thermidor.*

'The reading of the correspondence was hardly finished when St. Just ascended the tribune with a paper in his hand and asked leave to speak. Everybody's mind was still under the impression of Robespierre's speech at the sitting of yesterday—a speech that tended to subvert the Government, to divide, accuse, and murder the national representation, and establish his own power and despotism over the French people. Every one recollected the discussion which had followed this speech, and which had enlightened all the representatives of the people to a sense of their danger. Several members had reproached Robespierre personally with having substituted his own views for the public interest, and for having paralysed of his own authority the decrees of the National Convention, taking upon himself the suspension of the execution of these decrees; and denouncing his pride and unbounded ambition, which had left no doubt on many minds that he had aspired to a consolidated and uncontrolled tyranny. It was also recollected what a weak defence, if, indeed, it could be called a defence, he had made to these grave accusations, and that, for the first time, the voice of a guilty conscience had not allowed him to take that imperious and imposing tone which had served him so often so well, to persuade and impose

* It is another of the curious retributive coincidences so frequent in the revolutionary annals that this Duval, who in the Convention was remarkable for his opposition to all taxation, ended his days in a small employment in the Tax-office.

upon the eyes of the multitude. They remembered also his inexcusable absence for four decades, avowed by himself, from the functions in the Committee of Public Safety that the National Convention had confided to him—the impressions which he endeavoured to make on public opinion during that time—his various attempts to direct them against the operations of the Government—they remembered especially his wayward, his ambiguous conduct, for nearly a year. They had seen him when he could no longer hope to bring back the people to the fanaticism of the Catholic religion, *which was, in fact, his own*, substitute for it a new religion, and so force a great political assembly, a free and republican Government, to give up all those sacred principles which forbid a good government to interfere with religious matters otherwise than to prevent its abuses or punish the crimes which might arise from it. They had seen him perverting and abusing an institution [the Revolutionary Tribunal], severe it is true, but just, and, above all, salutary—substituting for it a law, vague in its expressions, insidious in its provisions, hypocritical in its pretences, but odious and atrocious in its executions and results. They had seen him setting himself against those who had found out his intentions and proposed the adjournment to a future discussion of that law, proscribing them by his eye, his gesture, and his voice, as guilty of a crime, and actually asking their heads, or getting it done by his agents.

'It was in these dispositions that St. Just found the minds of the people when he came to the tribune. His dark, ferocious, and sinister look, his hesitating and embarrassed tone, the hour at which he presented himself (twelve had just struck), his intimacy with Robespierre, the unusual presence of the latter in the Convention, the recollection of the preceding day,—all seem to announce a crisis, an important discussion, which was to be the forerunner of great events.'

The report then proceeds to give the various speeches pretty much as they appear in the Moniteur, but interposing here and there such observations as the following :—

'When Bourdon apostrophised Robespierre, every eye was turned on him with an expression of the horror which he inspired, whilst a general shudder is felt through the Assembly.' . . .

And as Billaud proceeded—

'One unanimous cry burst from the Assembly,—*Death to all tyrants!* This republican demonstration is prolonged. All the members are on their legs, and the attitude of each announces to the traitors that their last hour is come.'

When Billaud had concluded—

'Robespierre, whose rage it is easy to conceive, advances to the tribune, and believes that he can still be imposing by affecting the imperious tone which has always succeeded with him. But the charm is broken, conviction is entered in all their minds, and from all places he hears, *Down with the tyrant!* This terrible word stupefies him. He puts down his head, and comes down a few steps. The discussion of his crimes continues, and his execution (*supplice*) may be said to begin.'

When the arrest of his military partisans, Henriot, Boulanger, Lavalette, &c., was decreed—

'Robespierre again presented himself at the tribune, but was received by a unanimous cry of indignation. He persists, however, with a furious air, and in violent agitation. He is repelled on all sides with cries of *Down with the tyrant!* He turns round to St. Just [who all this time stood at the back of the tribune ready to avail himself of any opportunity of continuing his speech], but his attitude and looks are those of despair, and little calculated to encourage his accomplice. He still, however, persists in his efforts to be heard, but is again met by a universal cry of *Down with the tyrant!* and forced at last to silence.'

When Tallien renewed his attack on another topic, and Robespierre again attempted to make himself heard, the *Rapport* of Duval proceeds:—

'Robespierre, agitated and overpowered by a guilty conscience, desires to be sent to death at once. A member exclaims, "You deserve it a thousand times over!" The younger Robespierre approaches and takes the arm of his brother, and desires that he may share his fate. Their eyes are burning with rage—they have now abandoned all hope of imposing on the people by an affected calm and composure, and exhibit the real ferocity of their hearts. They abuse, they insult, they menace the National Convention. From all quarters the greatest indignation explodes, and drowns the cries of these madmen (*forcenés*). The disorder increases every minute. The president is forced to put on his hat to obtain order; and Robespierre senior, seizing on the momentary silence which this act always produces, addresses both the president and the members of the Assembly in the most injurious terms. Violent murmurs interrupt him. The whole National Convention rises in a body by an unanimous impulse. Several members propose that a man who so dares attack the majesty of the people in the persons of its representatives be taken into custody. "Both the brothers into custody,"

exclaims another. It is in vain that Robespierre continues in great agitation to menace the Assembly—in vain does he cross the floor and traverse several portions of the hall—in vain does he ascend and descend, without obtaining a hearing, the steps of that tribune where for so long he had spoken as a despot. An overpowering hatred of tyranny exhales from every soul, and forms around him an atmosphere in which he cannot breathe; he falls panting in a seat, where the republican indignation holds him, as it were, enchained. His arrest, as well as that of his brother, is then called for from all quarters, and is at last voted in the midst of numerous and enthusiastic applause.'

The brothers, however, seem to have recovered their composure, and resumed their places, when there arose

'a cry from all sides that the accused should appear at the bar, which is voted. Robespierre persists in refusing to submit to this order, though signified to him by one of the ushers. He strives again to speak, and utters some additional insults, which are again choked by the voice of the people, which forces him at last to come down to the bar and to submit to the law. His brother, Couthon, St. Just, and Lebas follow him, and are almost immediately carried away by the gendarmerie amidst the acclamations of all the citizens present, and with unanimous shouts of *Vive la Liberté! Vive la République!*'

After reading these extracts we cannot be surprised that the Convention should, on subsequent consideration, have refused its sanction to a record of such violence and injustice—for whatever might be their crimes, the parties had a right to be heard. Against St. Just and Augustine Robespierre there was no charge but their friendship for Maximilian, and in that, as well as in the real crimes of Maximilian and Lebas—those for which their memories are execrated by posterity—their assailants were as deep, or rather deeper, than they; and obscure and unaccountable as the whole of Robespierre's latter conduct was, we repeat our inclination to believe that the chief cause of his fall was his being suspected of an intention of returning to some system of decency, mercy, and religion.

One passage of this debate is wholly unnoticed either by the Moniteur or by Duval, and is an additional proof of the partiality of both reports to the *victrix causa*:—

'In the height of the terrible conflict, and at a moment when Robespierre seemed deprived by rage and agitation of the power of articulation, a voice cried, "*It is Danton's blood that is choking you!*"

Robespierre, indignant, recovered his voice and his courage to exclaim,—"Danton! Is it, then, Danton you regret? *Cowards!—lâches—Why did you not defend him?*"'

There was spirit, truth, and even dignity in this bitter retort—the last words that Robespierre ever spoke in public: and even these have been suppressed. The two Robespierres, St. Just, Couthon, and Lebas, were, in the first instance, removed to the Committee of General Security, which sat in the Hôtel de Brionne, close to the hall of the Convention. To them was soon after added Hanriot, the commander of *their* military force, who had been arrested while about to make an attack on the Convention. We are told that about five o'clock dinner was served to the five deputies in the secretaries' room. It is singular that in such circumstances their dinner should have been thought of—but, in truth, dinner seems to have been a serious question with all parties, and was near being a most important and decisive one, for at the very critical moment when the Convention had declared open war on the Commune and the Commune on the Convention, both the hostile bodies, instead of following up their respective measures, adjourned for refreshment:

'It is easy,' says Duval's Report, 'to feel that, after a sitting so long [it had lasted barely five hours and a half] and so fatiguing, an interval of repose was necessary. It was half-past five, and the sitting is adjourned till seven.'

The Commune, it is said, made a similar pause and for the same purpose—but this seems doubtful. Its agents certainly lost no time and showed considerable activity and energy. If they had been aware that the Convention had adjourned, they might perhaps have seized and shut up the empty hall, and would probably have obtained a complete victory,—as it was they recovered for some hours the ascendancy.

After the five deputies had *dined*, they were removed to separate prisons — Robespierre to *the Luxembourg;* his brother to St. Lazare; Couthon to *Port Royal*, now turned into a prison, and ridiculously called *Port Libre;* Lebas to La Force; and St. Just *aux Ecossais;* Hanriot remaining, pinioned and gagged, in the apartment of the Committee.* But his detention was not long, for

* From all these various prisons the deputies were released within a few hours, and almost without resistance—an additional proof of the power of Robespierre's party in the city.

Coffinhall, a judge of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and Payen, the agent general, both leaders of the Commune, rallied the forces (chiefly the city artillery), which had been discouraged and dispersed by the capture of Hanriot, and, proceeding to the Carrousel, stormed the Hôtel de Brionne, released Hanriot, and placed him again at the head of his troops. The jailer of the Luxembourg had refused to receive Robespierre, and the gendarmes who had him in custody were forced to convey him to the *Mairie*, where he arrived about eight o'clock, and was received, not as a prisoner, but as the 'Father of the People,' and delivered from the parricidal hands of his captors. Other detachments proceeding to the several prisons released the four other prisoners, and by twelve at night they were all assembled at the Hôtel de Ville, surrounded by deputies from most of the sections of Paris, protected by Hanriot's army, and in a condition, had they had a man of military talent and energy amongst them, to have marched upon and probably utterly defeated the Convention. But now, indeed, they lost their opportunity, and the Convention having appointed Barras commander-in-chief, and, at his request, twelve members as his assistants, one of the latter, Leonard Bourdon (not Bourdon de l'Oise), advanced boldly on the Hôtel de Ville at the head of the gendarmerie and some of the artillery who remained faithful, and with slight resistance penetrated into the building and made prisoners of Robespierre and all his party, whose previous hesitation and inaction were now expiated by desperate efforts at self-destruction.

We shall dispose first and shortly of the minor personages by extracts from the original procès verbaux and depositions concerning them.

The younger Robespierre threw himself out of a window of the first floor of the Hôtel de Ville, and was taken up alive, but with several fractures and wounds. He was immediately attended by four medical men of the neighbourhood, who found him so mutilated that they could neither examine his injuries nor pronounce on his state.* On being brought in a chair before certain local magistrates he had only strength

* to declare that his name was Robespierre—that he had voluntarily thrown himself out of the window to escape inevitable death from the conspirators who had come to seize him—that neither he nor his brother had ever ceased to do their duty in the Convention, and that no one could reproach him with anything.'

An eye-witness of his fall deposed that—

'being on the place in front of the Hôtel de Ville, he saw the wounded man here present get out of one of the windows and let himself down on the cornice that runs along the front of the building, and that he walked along the said cornice for some minutes, having his shoes in his hand—that, while there, a member of the Convention came on the *place* and read a proclamation for the arrest of the whole commune—that the wounded man was near enough to hear the proclamation, which was hardly finished when he threw himself forward and fell on the steps of the entrance of the building almost at the feet of the representative who gave him into custody of the deponent, who further observed that the body had fallen on a sabre and a bayonet, and knocked down the two citizens who carried them.'

The magistrates add, that, having

'received an order from three representatives of the people to remove the wounded man to the Committee of General Security, they had replied to the said representatives that the wounded man was not in a condition to be moved: the order was repeated for sending him to the Committee in whatever condition he might be.'

How or in what state he was so moved, and afterward removed to the Conciergerie, and thence to the Tribunal Révolutionnaire, and finally to the scaffold in the Place Louis XV., we are not told —it is only stated that he was executed with his brother. If he was still alive his suffering must have been terrible. Lebas was more fortunate—he shot himself dead just before the gendarmes had burst into the room where he, Robespierre, sen., St. Just, Couthon, and Dumas, the president of the Revolutionary Tribunal, were assembled. St. Just had a knife in his hand, which he surrendered quietly—and Dumas gave up a bottle of scents, which was taken from him, supposing it to be poison. Hanriot either threw himself, or was, as he stated, thrown by Coffinhall, out of a third-story window of the Hôtel de Ville into a small internal court of the building, where he was, some hours later, found in a sewer more than half dead, and solicited his captors to be put out of pain. Couthon, who was purblind and had long lost the use of his limbs, submitted quietly, and was removed by some of the people on a handbarrow, who seeing him, as they thought, half dead already, were going to throw the '*carrion*,' as they called it, into the river, but they were prevented, and they left the hand-

barrow and him on the parapet of the quay, whence he was removed by the gendarmes. Coffinhall escaped for the moment, but, after passing three days and three nights of terrible suffering from hunger and cold in the mud and bullrushes of the Ile des Cygnes (since united to the shore where the Pont de Jena now stands), he gave himself up to justice.

It is generally supposed that Robespierre attempted to shoot himself by discharging a pistol into his mouth, which however only fractured the lower left jaw, and left it hanging down by the flesh and ligaments; but a field-officer in the French army, of the name of *Meda*, subsequently claimed the honour of having fired this shot; and he supported his assertion by some plausible facts. Meda—who afterwards rose to be a colonel, and was killed in that rank at the battle of Moskwa—was at this period of the age of 18 or 19, and a private gendarme: as such he accompanied Leonard Bourdon in his attack on the Robespierrians in the Maison de Ville, and showed so much firmness and courage, that when Bourdon returned to the Convention, to give an account of his success, he brought Meda with him, placed him by his side in the Tribune, stated that he had with his own hand *killed* (*tué*) as the report first has it, or *struck*, *frappé*, as is subsequently stated, two of the conspirators, and obtained for him the honours of the sitting, honourable mention in the *Procès verbal*, and a promise of military promotion. The next day there appears an order of the Convention to deliver to Meda *a* pistol which had been placed on the bar the day before. All this the *Procès verbal* of the sittings and the report in the Moniteur record. But, on the other hand, it is not stated that *one* of the two struck by Meda was *Robespierre*. On the contrary, Bourdon says, that Meda *disarmed* him of a knife, but does not say that he either *struck* or *shot* HIM—a circumstance so transcendently important, that Bourdon could have hardly omitted to state it had it been so. Nor is it said that the pistol delivered to Meda was his own, nor that it was the pistol by which Robespierre was wounded; nor is any reason given why he should have shot Robespierre, whom, if his own account be correct, he might have taken alive. Meda, there can be no doubt, accompanied Bourdon (Bourdon says that he *never quitted him*), and distinguished himself generally; but neither in the *Procès verbal*, nor in the Moniteur, is there any evidence of his having shot Robespierre; and his own statement is somewhat at variance with Bour-

don's, and not very intelligible as to the position in which the alleged shot was fired. This would of itself excite some doubts, but these doubts are much strengthened by the following facts. 1. Barrère, in the official report (made, not like Bourdon's, verbally in the hurry and agitation of the moment, but on the third day, and after the collection and examination of all the facts) states distinctly that Robespierre clumsily wounded himself; 2. That the surgeon who dressed the wound made a technical and official report that it must have been inflicted by the patient himself, and was too small to have been made by the ball of an ordinary pistol, such as a gendarme would have carried; and, 3. It is stated that, as the poor wretch lay mangled on a table at the Hôtel de Ville, he supported his broken jaw and endeavoured to absorb the blood with a *pistol-bag*, which he had in his left hand. This trifling circumstance, which could hardly have been invented, strongly corroborates the reports of Barrère and the surgeon, and all the authenticated facts, as well as all the statements, except only the *tardy* assertions attributed to Meda himself.*

We say *attributed*, for on a careful examination of the whole evidence we have not the slightest doubt that the narrative published as Meda's is false in the main facts, which, as well as several minor errors, contradictions, and neologisms which it contains, induce us to hope that it was not written by Colonel Meda. It is probably one of those fabrications so common after the restoration, —but whoever be the writer, we think it in no respect entitled to credit.

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* M. Lamartine says that there were found on Robespierre two pocket-pistols still loaded and in their cases, which proves, he says, that he did not shoot himself. I know not where M. Lamartine can have borrowed any such statement;—it is at variance with all the evidence, both direct and circumstantial. I do not believe it.—1855.

† We find in the Appendix to Courtois' second Report a narrative by one Dulac, a clerk in the bureau of the Committee of Public Safety, '*ayant tout vu et presque tout touché pour ainsi dire*,' who was, he says, the first who found Robespierre lying wounded. '*Il n'est pas donc vrai que le gendarme présenté à la Convention par Léonard Bourdon lui ait brûlé la cervelle, comme il est venu s'en vanter.*'—pp. 207, 213.

This would be decisive, if we could give full credit to Dulac, but we think there is abundant internal evidence that his story was made up to suit his own purposes, to give himself importance, and to conceal, what we suspect was the fact, that he was a spy and traitor to both parties; we therefore do not avail ourselves of his evidence, and the case seems quite strong enough without it. We think it right to record more than our doubts of Dulac's veracity, because Thiers seems to rely on him in some more important points.

The editor or fabricator of Meda's memoirs says he was not able to get a sight of Courtois' second Report. It may be very rare, as he says the 'Bibliothèque Nationale' has no copy, but as we have seen two and possess one copy

The concluding scenes of the tragedy are given in a paper of 'Notes' appended to Courtois' second Report, perhaps drawn up by Courtois himself, which appear worthy of credit. They have at least a greater air of authenticity and probability than any other account that we have met, and we therefore venture to adopt them into our text.

'Robespierre was brought on a plank to the Committee of Public Safety, between one and two o'clock in the morning, by several artillerymen and armed citizens. He was placed on the table of the antechamber which adjoins that where the Committee holds its sittings. A deal box, which contained some samples of the ammunition bread sent to the Armée du Nord, was put under his head by way of pillow. He was for nearly an hour in a state of insensibility, which made us think that he was no more; but after an hour he opened his eyes. Blood was running in abundance from the wound he had in the left lower-jaw; the jaw was broken, and a ball had gone through the cheek. His shirt was bloody. He was without hat or neckcloth. He had on a sky-blue coat, nankeen breeches, white cotton stockings hanging down on his heels.

'At about three or four in the morning they perceived that he had in his hand a small white leather * bag, on which was written :—"*Au Grand Monarque: Lecourt, gun-maker to the king and to the army, Rue St. Honoré, near the Rue des Poulies, Paris;*" and on the other side of the bag,—"*To Mr. Archier.*" He used this bag to remove the coagulated blood which filled his mouth. The citizens who surrounded him watched all his movements: some of them even gave him some white paper (there was no linen at hand), which he employed in the same way, using only his right hand, and leaning on his left elbow.

'Robespierre two or three different times was very rudely and unceremoniously reproached by some of the bystanders, and particularly by a gunner, a countryman of his own, who abused him in the coarse language of a soldier with his treachery and crimes. At six o'clock, a surgeon, who happened to be in the court-yard of the Tuileries, was called in to dress his wound. By way of precaution he first put a key in his mouth. He found that he had the left

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of it, we cannot but suspect that he might also have seen it, but was not over anxious to find so direct a contradiction of the fable that he was endeavouring to accredit.

* Another account states that the bag was a woollen one; both these materials are in common use as cases for pocket-pistols, but whatever was the material of the bag, the circumstance of its being found in Robespierre's hand seems, as we have said, decisive against Meda's story.

jaw broken. He pulled out two or three teeth, bandaged up the wound, and got a basin of water which he placed by his side. Robespierre used it now and then, and to remove the blood which filled his mouth he used pieces of paper, which he folded for that purpose with his right hand only.

'At one moment he unexpectedly sat himself upright, drew up his stockings, and, sliding off the table, ran to seat himself in an arm-chair, and soon after asked for some water and clean linen.

'All the time he was lying on the table, after he had recovered his senses, he looked steadily at all the people about him, especially the messengers and attendants of the Committee of Public Safety, whom he recognised. He often looked up to the ceiling; but, except in a few convulsive movements now and then, he exhibited a remarkable apathy, even while his wound was dressing, which must have caused him great agony. His complexion, naturally bilious, had now the livid appearance of death.

'At nine o'clock Couthon, and Gobault,* one of the conspirators of the Commune, were brought each on a stretcher to the foot of the great staircase of the Committee [in the Tuileries], where they were deposited. The citizens in whose custody they were remained with them while a commissary of police and an officer of the National Guard reported the success of their mission to Billaud Varennes, Barrère, and Collot d'Herbois, then sitting in the committee-room. These then immediately took upon themselves to order that Robespierre, Couthon, and Gobault should be transferred without loss of time to the Conciergerie.

'This decree was immediately put into execution by the good citizens, to whom the custody of these three conspirators had been confided.

'It is said that Robespierre, as he was carried to the Conciergerie in an arm-chair down the grand staircase of the Committee, struck one of the men that were carrying him. St. Just and Dumas were brought to the committee as far as the anteroom, and taken the next moment to the Conciergerie by those who had brought them. St. Just looked attentively at the great framed copy of the *Droits de l'Homme* which hangs in that room, and said, pointing to it, "*and yet it was I who did that.*"'—*Second Rapport de Courtois, Appendix No.* 41.

The rest is shortly told. After the lingering agony just described—four and twenty hours of bodily and mental torture, insult, fever, and unquenched *thirst*—he and his four colleagues

* Substitute of the public accuser, guillotined with Robespierre next day.

of the Convention, with seventeen of his minor adherents, were brought before their own bloody Tribunal for identification, and thence conveyed by the same guards on the same carts, with the same executioner, and along the same tedious transit from the Conciergerie to the Place de la Révolution, as the thousands of victims that they had doomed to the same fate. The dead body of Lebas accompanied Robespierre, as that of Valase did Brissot. There was, however, some variance from what had recently been the routine of executions. The streets and windows were excessively crowded, and with what is represented as a better class of persons. There was a great curiosity to distinguish Robespierre, and when the gendarmes of the escort pointed him out, sometimes shouts of joy and sometimes execrations burst from the crowd —the latter particularly were directed against him by some persons who reproached him with the murder of friends and relations. He was not insensible—but he showed no emotion;—his eyes were closed, the bandages of his wound nearly covered his face, and his hand supported the bandages. Couthon and the younger Robespierre, both mutilated and covered with blood, were scarcely distinguishable. St. Just alone preserved something of his usual appearance and demeanour. Hanriot was without hat or coat, his hands, sleeves, and shirt all bloody: a voice in the crowd exclaimed, '*Ah, there he is, just as he was when he was massacring the priests at St. Firmin.*'

The procession halted in front of Duplay's* house—the scene of whatever quiet moments Robespierre could have passed since his

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* The whole family Duplay—father, mother, son, daughters—were all arrested the evening of the 9th Therm. Lamartine says, 'that same evening these furies of vengeance invaded the prison in which the mother Duplay had been thrown, strangled her and hanged her to her curtain rods.' I know not where M. Lamartine has found this anecdote—nor do I understand how these women could have invaded the Conciergerie, the strongest prison, and hung Madame Duplay to *her curtain rods*. All through his history M. Lamartine embroiders his narrative with numerous anecdotes for which he gives, and for which my tolerably extensive reading of revolutionary history supplies, no authority. Of the inaccuracies, and, in fact the falsehood of many of these anecdotes we have abundant and indisputable evidence—for instance, in the very next page he tells an interesting story about one of the daughters of this Duplay family, whom he describes as mourning *the loss of her father who had suffered with Robespierre*. A mere fable—the truth being, the Duplays, father and son, were by wonderful luck excepted from the general fate of Robespierre's adherents, and lived to be implicated in Babœuf's conspiracy in 1797, when they were again acquitted. Fifty such instances oblige me to say that I

first appearance in the political world—these windows were now closed * whence his female society were used to gratify their cruel patriotism by watching the daily fournées of victims; but their places were terribly supplied in the crowd below. A band of women—probably the *same furies of the Guillotine*, whose idol Robespierre had so long been—executed a fiendish dance of joy round the cart on which he was; and it seems that this brutal exultation was repeated round the guillotine while the execution was going on.

The first cart contained the two Robespierres, Couthon, and Hanriot, all so wounded and mutilated that Maximilian alone was able to ascend the scaffold without help. He had neither hat nor neckcloth, and still wore, though stained and torn, that same fantastical coat of sky-blue silk in which only six weeks before he had figured at the opposite end of the Tuileries Gardens in a power surpassing that of monarchs, and for a purpose to which it was impious in a mortal to aspire. But, beyond even this, there was a cruel acme of degradation and suffering—the brutal executioner tore away the bandage from his shattered head, and when the broken jaw fell, he twisted it round, that it might not interfere with the action of the machine—a sharp cry of pain followed this cruelty—but it was the last pang—and in a moment after, Robespierre was no more!

We are not of those who look presumptuously for special provi-

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attach very little credit to any of M. Lamartine's anecdotes for which I do not find some other authority.

* Lamartine, in his account of the execution of Camille Desmoulins, says,—'As the cart passed the windows of the house where Robespierre lodged, the populace, in homage to him, redoubled their cries of execration against Camille. *The shutters of Duplay's house were habitually shut at the hour that these processions usually passed;* but on this occasion Robespierre retired to the back part of the house, to avoid hearing these clamours, and there indulged in sentimental grief for his unhappy friend. "Ah! that poor Camille," said he; "why could I not save him? but he *would* ruin himself! (*il a voulu se perdre*)." Lamartine does not tell us where he found this fable; and he affects to believe the fact, though he admits a doubt as to the sincerity of Robespierre's grief. We suspect that he may have had the story from one of the Duplays who survived, and who would be induced to give this kind of contradiction, that the women of the family used to sit at their windows, to enjoy the sight of these processions; and particularly to a statement of Louvet, who says expressly, that as a batch of Girondins were going to execution *they saw at the windows* of Robespierre's apartments his mistress, Cornelia, her sisters, and some of his accomplices, which excited Gercy-Dupin, one of the sufferers, to accost them with cries of *Down with the tyrants! Down with the dictat rs!* and to continue these exclamations as long as they were in sight.—Louvet, *Récit.* 289.

dences * in human misfortunes, but it is impossible to divest the mind of the awful impression which *this last scene* must excite in such close approximation of time, place, and even garb, with that gaudy day in which the infatuated and audacious vanity of this unhappy man dared to announce—in the face of the awful evidences of nature—that a decree of the *National Convention recognized a* SUPREME BEING.

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* This was so much the public feeling, that immediately after his execution a print of the wounded head was published with this epigraph:—

'J'ai joué les Français et la Divinité,
Je meurs sur l'échafaud: je l'ai bien merité.'

ESSAY VII.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, MARCH, 1844.]

THE REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNALS.

1. *Souvenirs d'un Demi Siècle; Vie Publique—Vie Intime—Mouvement Littéraire—Portraits*, 1787–1836. Publiés par G. Touchard-Lafosse, Auteur des Chroniques de Œil-de-Bœuf, de l'Histoire de Paris, &c. &c. 4 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1836.
2. *Souvenirs de la Terreur de* 1788 *à* 1793. Par M. G. Duval, précédes d'une Introduction Historique, par M. Charles Nodier, de l'Académie Française. 4 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1841.
3. *Souvenirs Thermidoriens.* Par Georges Duval. 2 vols. 8vo. Paris, 1844.

THE most stupendous phenomenon, and yet the most inexplicable enigma of the whole French Revolution, is the REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL. With a distant and general view of its wholesale atrocities the public memory is but too familiar; but the real motives of its creation—the interior springs by which it was worked—the object, the interest which any man or party could have had, or fancied they had, in such a protracted and diurnal system of indiscriminate murder, and, above all, the wanton, the impudent, the insane absurdity of thousands of its individual judgments, are mysteries which, the more closely they are examined, seem to us only the more difficult to be explained or even guessed at.

Nothing, therefore, would be more valuable or interesting than any *bonâ-fide* testimony of the actors in, or even the near spectators of, those events—anything that should convey to us the contemporaneous feelings and impressions of men's minds, and in any degree explain how such a state of national insanity could

have lasted a week, and how social and domestic life was carried on amidst those scenes of anarchy and death. With this feeling we opened the works whose titles we have placed at the head of this article, but we have been altogether disappointed. Their compilers appear to have speculated on the interest which the public has shown for some authentic details of that wonderful period, and fabricated these works to meet that demand. We know that there have been, and may be yet living, two small *littérateurs*, of the names of Touchard-Lafosse and Georges Duval; and it is possible that they, or more probably some one in their names, may have concocted these volumes from old pamphlets, files of newspapers, published memoirs, and so forth; but we will take upon us to assert most unhesitatingly that, as what they profess to be—*Souvenirs*, or actual personal recollections of the alleged authors, they are contemptible impostures. We have for the last twenty years seen and exposed so many fabrications of the same kind, that there is, in this repetition of the fraud, nothing that surprises us—no, not even that M. Charles Nodier, a member of the French Academy, should have written a prefatory essay to Duval's book to guarantee its authenticity. And we confidently place all these more recent speculations on the credulity of the public on the same shelf with the *Mémoires of Robespierre*, fabricated by the same M. Nodier—of *Louis XVIII.*—of *the Abbé Lenfant*—of *Le Vasseur*—of *Madame de Créqui*—all of which have been, since our detection, *proved* (some in courts of justice) to be *forgeries*.* So far, then, from relying on these '*Souvenirs*' for information, we confess that it is these gross impostures which, in addition to the negligence of some recent *historians*, have prompted us to endeavour to collect from more authentic sources some rational account of that great mystery—the Revolutionary Tribunal.

We begin by observing that its very name and date have been generally misunderstood. We hear and read of *the* Revolutionary Tribunal, but, in fact, there were four of them usually comprised under that generic name, and characterised by the same spirit of

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* We are tempted to give one instance of the impudent falsehood with which these things are fabricated. Duval is made to say (vol. i. p. 215) that, on the 9*th Thermidor* (27*th July*, 1794), he met Fouquier and Paris the chief clerk of the Tribunal, and heard their conversation. The fabricator did not know that Paris had been in prison, and *au secret*, ever since the 9*th April!*

injustice and cruelty, but established at different periods, by different factions, for different purposes, and with different powers. The first was instituted on the 17th August, 1792, which, after having condemned and executed twenty-eight persons (of whom but half-a-dozen were on political charges), was suddenly and contemptuously dismissed on the 30th November. The second was that damned to everlasting fame as the *Revolutionary Tribunal*, and which has extended its terrible name to the others. This tribunal was created on the 10th March, 1793, and, after executing above 2700 persons, was abolished, and the majority of its members sent to the scaffold, on the fall of Robespierre. The third may be considered as a renewal of the last, but with restricted powers and different persons; it was reorganised on the 9th August, 1794, but, after an existence of about four months, was abrogated on the 24th December, 1794, on which day it was replaced by the fourth of these tribunals, which, after trying and condemning Fouquier Tinville, the Accusateur-Public of the second tribunal, and those of his colleagues who still survived, was finally dissolved on the 2nd June, 1795. The *name*, too, has been generally misunderstood. To the first two tribunals the name '*Revolutionary*' was at their creation formally and purposely denied, because that title was proposed with the intention of relieving them from the ordinary principles or restraints of law, customs, or constitution, with licence to pursue by every kind of means—*per fas et nefas*—the ultimate object of assuring what the rulers of the hour should be pleased to denominate the *salut public*. It was in this sense of the word that the Convention suspended the Constitution it had itself just created (10th October, 1793), and declared itself a *revolutionary power*, and its government a *revolutionary government*—that the deputy Dupin, in defence of his share in the proceedings before the second Tribunal against the *Fermiers-Généraux*, says that the government 'voulaient que cette affaire fût jugée *sans examen et révolutionnairement*'—and that Fouquier Tinville complained (*Procès Fouquier*, xxx.) that his prosecutors confounded the justice of an ordinary with that of a *Revolutionary Tribunal*. There are many passages in the history of the Revolution, and especially in that of the Convention, particularly in the proceedings of the Conventional Proconsuls, as they were called, in the provinces, in which this peculiar use of

the word *revolutionary* becomes important, and we therefore notice the distinction.

We know of but three *contemporaneous* works which afford any direct evidence as to the proceedings of the Revolutionary Tribunal. The first is one that we have often mentioned, and which, if we are to believe some modern French writers, is become very rare,—'*Liste Générale et très-exacte des Noms, Ages, Qualités, et Demeures de tous les Conspirateurs qui ont été condamnés à Paris par le Tribunal Révolutionnaire, établi à Paris par la loi du* 17 *Août,* 1792; *et par le second Tribunal, établi à Paris par la loi du* 10 *Mars, pour juger tous les Ennemis de la Patrie.*' This List, which affects to give the judgments from day to day, is printed with a slovenly negligence, which shows how very indifferent the public had already become to accuracy in such matters, and the cases judged in the first courts were evidently not reported till after the establishment of the second. It contains the names and ages of the victims, with a running number affixed, and a summary of the charges on which they were condemned, but no details whatsoever of the proceedings.*

The second is the '*Bulletin du Tribunal Criminel.*' This was published in quarto numbers of four pages each. It professed to be under the sanction of the Tribunal, and was meant to be regular and contemporaneous. It began by giving, with a slight degree of decency, some details of the proceedings, and occasionally of the executions; but the Tribunal soon became so rapid in its movements, that the *Bulletin*—though it abridged ordinary cases to a mere statement of the charges, and omitted both the evidence and the defence—soon fell into arrear. Then it was forced to leave intervals, to be subsequently supplied, which never was done; and, finally, it was run out of breath long before the Tribunal had attained its greatest velocity. The result is, that, of 2730 victims of this Tribunal, the *Bulletin*—at least as much

* The 'Moniteur' also gave, from time to time, *lists of the condemned* of the same general character as the *Liste des Condamnés*. These are, however, not only incomplete, but as inaccurate as the *Liste*. There was also a list, under the title of *Le Glaive Vengeur*, which contains a few slight notices of the victims, but it went but a short way. There were also different editions and even piracies of the works mentioned in the text; but the variances are of no importance. It appears from the *Procès Fouquier*, that printed lists of the sufferers used to be placarded on the walls of the city. There was also a *Gazette des Tribunaux*, that gave a report of some of the more remarkable trials.

of it as we have been able to collect—reports only 690, or about one-fourth, and of these there are not above a dozen cases in which the evidence is given.

The third, and, though limited to one trial, the most curious of all, is an account of the '*Procès*' against Fouquier Tinville, the *Accusateur Public*, and several of his accomplices, judges and jurors of the second Revolutionary Tribunal. This, in the copy before us, forms the seventh volume of the *Bulletin* collection. This report—most valuable, because it affords the best, and indeed almost the only, insight that we have into the interior of the Tribunal—though tolerably full during the earlier days of that tedious trial, fell at length into arrear, and was forced to crowd into its last number the proceedings of the concluding fortnight—giving no details whatsoever of the defences of Fouquier and his colleagues. This is much to be regretted, as we are told that Fouquier made a most able and artful defence, four hours long; but, as some compensation, we have two printed apologies published by him before the trial; and as it was the practice of the Tribunal, as it is of all French courts, to not only allow but invite the accused to make his reply to each piece of evidence as it arises, we possess the substantial answers of the parties to the most prominent charges, though we have not their general replies.

We do not know—indeed, we do not believe—that the collections that we have endeavoured to make of the numbers (for so they were published) of the *Liste* and the *Bulletin* are complete. Some towards the end appear to be wanting, but, such as they are, they give us a view of these four tribunals, less imperfect, and therefore more astonishing, than anything we have been able to find elsewhere.

The first Tribunal consisted of two sections, or, as we should say, of two courts; and these two courts had double judges and juries to relieve each other, and enable them to proceed without intermission. The second was originally a single court; but, in July, 1793, on pretence that it did not work fast enough, it was divided into two sections; and, finally, by a decree of the 5th September, 1793, into four. I find, however, no traces of this division having come into actual effect. Indeed, the variety and apparent inconsistency of the decrees made from time to time for the regulation of the Tribunal render it very difficult to ascertain the details of its organisation or proceedings at different dates. When-

ever any legal impediment to the march of murder was raised, the Tribunal applied to the Government, and the Government and the Convention immediately interfered, by *ex post facto* legislation, to remove the obstacle; 'so that there were passed, in little more than a year, about forty separate decrees, forming a code which might be entitled murder made easy' (*Hist. du Trib. Rév.*, i. 130). The presidents, judges, foremen of the juries, and public accusers, should by law have been elected by the sections of Paris, but they seem to have been in the first instance chosen by the Commune, and were afterwards named, from time to time, by the Committees of Government. Each court was to consist of a president, and at least two assistant judges, and of twelve jurymen, who should have been chosen by lot for each case from a general list furnished in proportions by all the Departments of the Republic; and the judges and the jurymen were assigned the same pay as the members of the Assembly, viz., eighteen francs per diem; the presidents and Accusateur Public were, we believe, allowed double that sum. The slight provisions for the independence of the juries were disregarded from the very beginning. On the allegation that there was not time to make the departmental elections, a number of well-known Jacobins of Paris were appointed, of whom we find, in the indictment against Fouquier and his accomplices, the following character:—

'Many of those who thus undertook the duties of jurors *could not read nor write*, and some of them executed their office in an *habitual state of drunkenness*.'—*Procès Fouquier*, &c., p. 52.

'The jury list, thus garbled, could afford but ten jurors, and sometimes only nine; latterly a decree was passed to legalise juries of seven; and, instead of being chosen with any semblance of impartiality, they were appointed by the Committees, and selected for each trial by the public prosecutor: those who dared to show anything like hesitation were immediately excluded; and those whose zeal, or rather ferocity, was most flagrant, were put forward in the cases of the greatest interest or emergency. All these courts sat in the *Palais de Justice*—the first in what had been the *Grande Chambre* of the old Parliament, and is now the Cour de Cassation—this was called the *Salle de la Liberté*. The second court was held, we believe, in the *Chambre de la Tournelle* of the old Parlement, then called the *Salle d'Egalité*, and now, we believe, the

Chambre des Requêtes. We have no means of ascertaining whether the division of labour between these courts was made on any principle: for the first ten months, indeed, the *Bulletin* (which affects to give details) never makes any distinction as to the *sections* of the court; nor does it give, except accidentally, the name of the president or of the jurymen. The same may be said of the *Liste des Condamnés*, except that, about the 10th of February, 1794, at the 369th victim, it begins to distinguish the two courts; and they seem soon after that time to have been worked with daily and about equal activity. At first, while persons were tried individually, there was a single seat for the prisoner; but when they began to try several together, graduated rows of benches were raised against the wall, which were extended from time to time so as to hold thirty, forty, sixty, and at last scaffolding was about to be erected to seat two hundred prisoners at once. When many were tried together, the person whom the Public Accuser chose to designate as the chief of the conspiracy, such as Brissot, Hébert, Fabre, &c., was placed in a chair more prominent than the benches. This court communicated, by a small winding staircase, with the dungeons of the Conciergerie, situated under all this portion of the Palais de Justice. Into the Conciergerie prisoners intended for trial were generally brought on the previous evening, and through this staircase they ascended to and descended from the Tribunal: on some occasions, in which it was necessary to carry prisoners unable to walk, these stairs were found too narrow, and they then went round by the prison door, and so up the great steps of the Palais.

We shall now endeavour to give a view, that we know must be very imperfect, of the operations of those wonderful tribunals. The first Tribunal, of the 17th August, 1792, short-lived and comparatively insignificant as were its own proceedings, was, in the circumstances and principles of its creation, of more immediate importance and of more permanent influence than any other events of the Revolution, except the taking the Bastille—the 6th October—and the 10th of August. The two great parties—the Girondins and the Jacobins—had already begun to take opposite views in the Legislative Assembly. The Girondins had a decided preponderance both in numbers and talents. Their *first* object was ministerial place and power, under the Constitution of 1791; and it was to force themselves on the King that they had made the ineffec-

tual insurrection of the 20th June. The Jacobins bid higher for the favour of the populace: their object was the deposition of the King—perhaps his death—at least a change of dynasty, and some of them probably dreamed of a republic. For these purposes *they* prepared and executed the revolution of the 10th August. This violence was, for a few hours, deplored and repudiated by the Girondins; but it was so evident an imitation of their own attempt of the 20th June, and was followed by such an overwhelming burst of popular enthusiasm, that they hastened to adopt it, and, having the majority of the Assembly with them, turned it to their own account, and installed themselves as the Executive Government, in lieu of the suspended and imprisoned monarch, giving to their Jacobin allies, who had really won the victory, but a scanty and subordinate share of the spoil. Of the six ministers who constituted the *Executive Council*, one only—Danton—was of this party. The name of Robespierre, who did not belong to the Assembly, does not seem to have been mentioned. But, in the night between the 9th and 10th, there had arisen a new power. Some of the more violent Jacobins had usurped the municipal government of Paris, under the title of the *Commune*. Of this body Robespierre was the instigator and director, and he lost no time in proving to the Assembly and the Girondin Ministry that he and his party were not to be neglected with impunity. They claimed, as in truth they might, the exclusive merit of this new revolution; and for the purpose, as they urged, of giving it its full effect, and carrying out the intentions of the victorious patriots, raised a cry for the creation of a Revolutionary Tribunal, for the more complete extirpation of the monarchy, by the punishment—summarily, and without forms of appeal—of all the enemies of the *People*, and especially of the *conspirators and traitors of the 10th August*. The new Government and the Assembly were alarmed at the proposition of such a tribunal, with powers so extensive, and for objects so vague and indefinite; and reasonable men wondered how parties who loudly proclaimed that they had *concerted*, conducted, and happily executed so glorious a revolution, could pretend that it was the work of *conspirators and traitors*. But, with the same cowardice and inconsistency which marked the whole course of the Girondin faction, the Assembly attempted a compromise, by decreeing that the *crimes of the 10th August* should be tried before the ordinary criminal tribunals. This concession encouraged

instead of appeasing the Jacobins. The Commune took measures approaching to open revolt—a deputation, headed by Robespierre *in person*, told the Assembly in terms, the insolence of which was aggravated by the menacing tone and gestures of the spokesman, that their decree was good for nothing; that what were called the '*crimes of the 10th August*' were but a small part of those of which the people had to complain; and that, to satisfy their just impatience and ensure their tranquillity, it was necessary to create this Tribunal to investigate all counter-revolutionary affairs, and to punish the guilty summarily and without appeal. The Assembly, though it exhibited its weakness by inviting Robespierre to the honours of the sitting, still made a show of resistance. But, in the meanwhile, the populace was roused into actual insurrection. They surrounded the Assembly, and threatened the *Manège* with the fate of the *Château;* and a fresh deputation told it, in still more peremptory language, that, if it did not instantly sanction the proposed tribunal, the tocsin should be rung and the drums should beat to arms that very night, and, if justice was an hour longer delayed, the people would take it by its own avenging hands. This was decisive; the Assembly submitted to all that was required—with one verbal exception—it had been proposed that the new court should be called a *Revolutionary Tribunal*, the decree entitled it only an *Extraordinary Tribunal.* The personal organization of the Tribunal was conceded to the municipal administration of Paris, and Robespierre was deservedly complimented with the offer of being its first President—a subaltern honour, which—looking, no doubt, to higher objects—he declined; and one of his creatures, afterwards one of his victims—Osselin—was appointed. On Osselin's election to the Convention, about the middle of September, he was succeeded by one Pepin Desgrouettes.

The violence with which its creation was urged and visited is a sufficient proof that it was intended for purposes far higher than those on which it was ultimately employed. Our own conjecture is that, besides the immediate triumph which its creation afforded to Robespierre's personal vanity and political ambition, it was aimed against the King and Queen, and was prepared as a kind of judicial engine which should in due season dispose of them and the monarchy. The resolution, however, to decide these great interests by the more solemn voice of a NATIONAL CONVENTION superseded those secret and embryo objects of The Tribunal,

which, after it had condemned one officer of the Swiss Guards who had defended the Château and acquitted another, no more inquired into any of the '*crimes of the 10th of August*' than into those of the St. Barthelemi, and soon fell, as we shall see, into the investigation of cases fitter for the cognizance of a police office.

Its proceedings opened with the arraignment of three persons, thus designated in the *Liste*:—

'1. Louis David Collenot, (dit) D'Angremont, accused of crimping [*embauchage*], executed 26th August, 1792.

'2. La Porte, superintendent of the civil list, convicted of complicity in counter-revolutionary conspiracies, executed 28th August.

'3. Durosoi, editor of the *Gazette de Paris*, and of another journal called *Le Royalisme*, convicted of conspiracy, executed 29th August.'

As these were the first steps of the new Tribunal, it may be worth while to observe how early a sample they afford of the illegality, injustice, and cruelty of the proceedings of all these courts, and of the strange inaccuracy with which they are recorded. The facts alleged against those persons were such as, even if proved, no other jurisdiction that ever existed would have treated as capital, and hardly as penal; and certainly all that we can discover to have been *proved* were, while the constitutional monarchy still existed, absolutely innocent. They had, moreover, no relation to anything like '*crimes of the 10th of August*;' and the published reports of the proceedings exhibit errors of dates and names. Dangremont was a clerk in a public office, of no weight or character, and the offence absurdly denominated *embauchage*, on pretence of which he was executed, was the alleged employment of persons who were to distribute Royalist publications, and take the Royalist side in groups and coffee-houses, and so forth. He was executed by torchlight, and amidst the hootings of the populace, not, as the *Liste* states, on the 26th August, but on the night of the 21st. In the account of his trial, in the *Moniteur* of the 30th, he is miscalled '*Danglemont*,' and a second time doubly misnamed '*Connet Danglemont*;' and Lacretelle, in his *Précis Chronologique de la Révolution*, makes the same mistakes. M. La Porte was the Minister of the Civil List, and the chief allegation against him was that he had paid, out of the privy purse, for the printing and distribution of certain Royalist placards and pamphlets —a practice which Roland—whom the Assembly had forced upon the King as Minister of the Interior—had been employing *against*

his master at the same time and to an infinitely greater extent; but the real motive of M. La Porte's condemnation was to appease and gratify the populace by the execution of one who was officially so near the *King's* person, and so much in his confidence, and whose condemnation was therefore a promise and a pledge that his royal master should undergo the same fate. His execution is also misdated in the *Liste*—the 28th instead of the 25th.

The real name of the third victim was *De Rosay*, but he was condemned and executed as *Durosoy*, and under that name has passed into all the biographies and such of the *histories* as deign to notice such details. He was a man of letters, and one of the few Royalist journalists—a class which his fate was intended to extinguish, and did so. His death, too, is misdated the 29th for the 25th, which is the more remarkable, because, when going to execution on the latter evening, his last words were, '*I glory as a Royalist in dying on the day of St. Louis!*'

We are aware that, amidst the gigantic horrors of those scenes, such small circumstantial mistakes—some of them, no doubt, mere clerical errors—may seem hardly worth notice; but they appear to us worthy of this passing remark as indicative of the laxity and indifference of both the Tribunal and the Public about even a decent hypocrisy of justice.

The Tribunal, having gratified the populace with these executions, ventured to acquit two or three persons. But, by a strange fatality, one of these acts of justice produced, or, at least, was made the occasion, of the most surprising and deplorable consequences. One of the King's last ministers had been the *Count de Montmorin*, and, of course, his very name might be expected to ensure a sentence of death. But he happened to have a cousin, a *Marquis* de Montmorin, who was governor of Fontainebleau. Whether it was by mistake for his cousin that the Marquis * was originally arrested does not appear, but on the trial nothing could be found to justify even his detention, and he was, after a long deliberation, acquitted accordingly, on the morning of the 1st September. This verdict was heard with indignation by the populace, who assailed the court with such violence that it was forced, for the prisoner's safety and their own, to recommit him to prison,

* So he is called by most writers, but his father the Marquis was still living, and we find that he was sometimes addressed *M. le Comte.*—*Trib.*, p. 27.

in order to a new trial '*at the requisition of the people.*' The exasperation was so great, that the President himself (Osselin) was obliged to conduct the Marquis back to prison, and, in doing so, narrowly escaped death from the sabre of one of the National Guard, who either mistook him for his prisoner, or, as the *Bulletin* states, wished to revenge on the judge the verdict of the jury. It was just at this time that the elections for the Convention were about to take place, and it was determined by the Jacobin candidates—Danton, Robespierre, and Co.—to strike a blow of such terror as should put all opposition to flight, and ensure the return of their own list for the city and neighbourhood of Paris, and, indeed, for the rest of France; but Paris was the first object. For this purpose they resolved on the celebrated domiciliary visits of 29th and 30th August to fill the prisons, and the massacres to empty them. There can be no doubt that all this had been already arranged when the supposed acquittal of M. de Montmorin, 'one of the last ministers of the *Tyrant*,'* was adroitly seized on by Danton (if, indeed, he had not already pre-arranged it) to raise and justify the exasperation of the people. Other inflammatory circumstances were artfully superadded, the massacres commenced, and both the MM. de Montmorin perished—the Marquis at the Conciergerie, and the Count at the Abbaye—with many hundred others as innocent as they; and Danton, Robespierre, Marat, *Egalité*, Osselin the *President of the Tribunal*, and their atrocious associates, were elected, without a dissentient voice, representatives of the city of Paris—*all* to be massacred in their turns, by their mutual animosities and the retributive justice of Heaven.

'On the very days of the massacres, the Tribunal, terrified like the rest of Paris, or affecting to be so, condemned two persons who would probably have been also acquitted a day or two before. One—on the 2nd September—was a poor carter, by name Jean Julien, who, having been sentenced to *exposition* (a kind of pillory) for some minor offence, had exclaimed, '*Vive le Roi!—Vive M. Lafayette!—a fig for the nation!*' The other was—on the 3rd September—the Baron de Bachman, Major-General of the Swiss Guards. Why he was singled out for trial, or on what pretence of a crime, we cannot discover; for even if the charge against him, of having ordered the Swiss to fire, were true, he would have been only

* M. Thiers, in his *History* (v. ii. p. 39), makes the same blunder.

performing his military duty in pursuance of the treaties between France and Switzerland, and in this special case under the written orders of Pétion, the mayor of Paris. But even this charge fell to the ground, for it turned out that Bachman had taken no part in the actual conflict, having left the Palace in company with the King before the firing began. It was clear that, even before that Tribunal, he must be acquitted. But, while the trial was going on above, the massacre of the other prisoners was going on in the courtyard of the Conciergerie below, and then followed a scene which we transcribe from the *Bulletin* itself:—

'Here the court was invaded by a great body of armed men, who, addressing themselves to the judges, required Bachman to be delivered up to them, saying, that it was the day of vengeance of the People, and that the prisoner must be given up to them. These words spread consternation over a number of Swiss soldiers who had been brought up as witnesses in the cause, who threw themselves under the tables and benches to hide themselves from the armed mob. Bachman alone—he who had now been thirty-six hours that the trial had already lasted without sleep—maintained the greatest tranquillity. His countenance was unmoved; he arose from the chair in which he had been placed, and advanced to the bar, and presented himself to the people, as if to say, *Sacrifice me.* The President harangued the people, and invoked them to respect the law, under whose sword the culprit already was. This quieted them; and they returned down to the Conciergerie to finish the work they had commenced there, of which twenty-two prisoners had been already the victims.'—*Bulletin*, i. 39.

Our readers will hardly wonder that, after such a visit, the judges and juries made haste to excuse themselves from another; and Bachman was found guilty—of what the record does not say; but it thus closes its account of this trial, which had lasted two days and nights:—

'The President addressed the prisoner in a *superb discourse*, who heard it and his sentence without a word; and at seven o'clock in the morning, all being ready for the execution, he ascended the cart with resignation, and, when arrived at the scaffold, *lent himself with the best grace to that cruel operation.*'—*Ib.*, 40.

The only other political execution we find is that of old Cazotte, the poet, who, at the age of seventy-four years, had been arrested on account of some private letters of his to La Porte, his old and

intimate friend, found in the possession of the latter. He had been thrown into prison, and was about to perish in the massacres of September, when he was saved by the courage and piety of his daughter, who exposed her own person to the pikes of the assassins, and actually awed and melted them into mercy; but three weeks later he was again arrested, and brought before the Tribunal, which was more inexorable than even the mob of murderers, and on the 25th of September the guillotine left the heroic Elizabeth Cazotte fatherless.

These five persons, and a poor clerk some way connected with Dangremont, were the only political victims of the first Tribunal. The massacres had probably done most of the work that this had been intended to do, and had, in truth, superseded it by their hardly more expeditious murders; but, as the fate of the royal family was still undecided, it was, we suppose, thought expedient to keep the Tribunal alive to be applied if necessary; and, therefore, in order that it might have something to occupy its time, the ordinary criminal business of the metropolis was, by a decree of the 11th of September, 1792, transferred to it; and in consequence of this decree it tried and sent to the guillotine the robbers of the *Garde-Meuble*, and was busy with the trial of some minor offences, when—the resolution for the trial of the King by the Convention having been finally taken—on the morning of the 1st of December (misdated, with the usual inaccuracy of the bulletins of these revolutionary courts, 31st of November), the Tribunal found itself suddenly, without notice or reason given, dissolved by a decree of the preceding day. It ventured to remonstrate against this sudden suppression, but the Convention treated the appeal with contempt, and the *Extraordinary* Tribunal was extinguished —but only to reappear, as we shall see, more formidable than ever.

For three months the trial and the death of the King—in which the Girondins had as weakly as wickedly concurred with the Jacobins—had suspended the struggle between them; but, when that common object was disposed of, the two parties of regicides renewed their internecine struggle, and a Revolutionary Tribunal became once more the question which was to decide their fate.

The circumstances were very similar to those which had led to the creation of the first, but exaggerated in violence and extent;

and it was clear that the Girondins, who hitherto had been contending for power, were now fighting for life. Accordingly, this struggle was longer and more violent on both sides; the Girondins had the impotent majority of the Assembly, the Jacobins the audacious tumults of the capital; in the former case insolent menaces had sufficed—now an actual insurrection besieged the Convention. Vergniaud, in the height of the debate, prophetically exclaimed that 'the proposed Tribunal was an inquisition a thousand times more formidable than that of Venice, and that they would die rather than submit to it.' The Girondins put forth all their strength, and had nearly succeeded in obtaining an adjournment. 'The sitting,' says the *Moniteur*, 'was over, and the members were moving away, when Danton rushed to the tribune, recalled them to their seats and to a sense of their duty, in a tone that at once quelled the Assembly into silent attention, and presently into terror, when he proceeded to warn them that they had no alternative between this proposed Tribunal and that supreme and more summary one—the *tribunal of popular vengeance!*' (*soyons terribles pour dispenser le Peuple de l'être*). The Assembly recognised the spirit of the Septembrisers, and submitted. La Revellière feebly made, and Vergniaud feebly seconded, a proposition for the *appel nominal*, or division. But even that the Girondins had not nerve to carry out. Their cowardice had sacrificed the King, it now sacrificed themselves. They thought, perhaps not without reason, that they were reduced to the alternative of instant massacre, or of submitting to the creation of a tribunal which they knew was meant to murder them in detail. The instant overcame the prospective danger, and the fatal Tribunal was decreed with little variation, either in its composition or attributes, from the former, but with a wider jurisdiction, '*to try and condemn without appeal all traitors, conspirators, and counter-revolutionists.*'

On this decisive occasion, a man, whose name has become, even amongst the Jacobins, pre-eminently infamous—Carrier—the scourge of Nantes—and who died at last by this, his own weapon—proposed to call it 'the *Revolutionary* Tribunal.' This, for the reasons we before mentioned, was strenuously resisted, but was supported by one whose cold and hypocritical cruelty, contrasted with his subsequent servility to a despot, is really more infamous than even the frank and headlong ferocity of Carrier—*Cambacérès—the Prince Arch-Chancellor of the Empire*—Cambacérès would

not allow the delay even of one night in passing this code of blood, and exclaimed,

'I oppose any adjournment until we shall have *decreed and organised a Revolutionary Tribunal.*'—*Moniteur*, 13 *Mars*, 1793.

But even for the then state of the Convention the proposition of the future *Highness* was too strong, and the tribunal was, after a hard struggle, only entitled *Tribunal Extraordinaire*, and was subjected to certain forms, from which, loose as they were, it was soon freed, when the expulsion of the Girondins left Cambacérès and his party masters of the Aceldama—the field of blood.

The second Tribunal was decreed on the 10th March, 1793, and commenced its operations about the 7th April; and we think it will be more convenient, before we enter into any details, that we sho ud lay before our readers a kind of chronological and numerical table of the whole operations of the Tribunal. We shall follow a sort of classification which we find in the contemporaneous publications, and which the Tribunal itself seems to have adopted. Where any batch was distinguished by a special title, we shall preserve it; the other and intermediate cases we shall give under the head of *various:* and various, indeed, they were—not as to the alleged crime, which was generally *conspiracy*—nor as to the result, which was invariably *death*—but various beyond belief in the pretexts under which the several victims were brought to this common butchery:—

Class.	Date.	Numbers executed.
	1793.	
Various	Apr. 7 to June 14	20
Conspirators of *Bretagne*	June 18	13
Affair of *Bourdon*	July 16	9
Various	„ 17 to Aug. 28	9
Affair of *Rouen*	Sept. 6	9
Various	„ 7 to Oct. 30	35
The Queen	Oct. 16	1
Brissotins	„ 31	21
Various	Nov. 1 to Nov. 30	53
First Affair of *Coulommiers*	„ 30	10
	1794.	
Various	Dec. 2 to Jan. 31	138
Second Affair of *Coulommiers*	Jan. 31	8
Various	Feb. 1 to Mar. 1	77

Class.	Date.	Numbers executed.
	1794.	
Third Affair of *Coulommiers*	Mar. 2.	10
Various	„ 2 to Mar. 25.	32
Affair of *Clamecy*	„ 15.	15
Various	„ 16 to Mar. 23.	22
Hébertists	„ 24.	19
Various	„ 25 to Apr. 2.	29
Dantonists	Apr. 5.	14
Various	„ 5 to Apr. 12.	15
Chaumette	„ 13.	18
Various	„ 14 to Apr. 17.	31
Affair *Laborde*	„ 18.	17
Parlementaires	„ 20.	25
Various	„ 20 to Apr. 21.	12
D'Espremenil, &c.	„ 21.	13
Various	„ 23.	9
Affair *de Verdun*	„ 23.	33
Various	„ 24 to May 1.	65
Affair *de Pommeau*	May 1.	6
Various	„ 2.	3
Grenadiers des Filles St. Thomas	„ 3.	19
Various	„ 3 to May 7.	57
Fermiers Généraux	„ 8.	28
Madame Elizabeth, &c.	„ 10.	25
Various	„ 11 to May 31.	200

From this time forward the executions are so numerous, that we think it worth while, at the expense of a little space, to distinguish each day. The blank days were *Décadis*, the *Sabbath* of the Atheists.

	1794.		
Various	June	1.	13
Various	„	2.	13
Affair of *Seden* 27, and various 5	„	3.	32
Various	„	4.	16
Various	„	5.	6
Various	„	6.	19
Affair *des Ardennes* 18, and various 2	„	7.	20
Décadi,	June	8.	
Various	„	9.	22
Various	„	10.	13
Various	„	11.	22
Various	„	12.	17

Class.	Date.	Numbers executed.
	1794.	
Various	June 13	23
Parlement de Toulouse 26, and var.ˢ 12	„ 14	38
Various	„ 15	19
First affair of *Bicêtre* 37, and var.ˢ 5	„ 16	42
Affair *des Chemises Rouges* 54, & var.ˢ 7	„ 17	61*
	Décadi, June 18.	
Various	„ 19	16
Various	„ 20	36
Affair *de Caussade* 18, and various 7	„ 21	25
Various	„ 22	15
Various	„ 23	19
Various	„ 24	25
Affair of *La Vendée* 36, and various 9	„ 25	45
2nd affair of *Bicêtre* 35, and var.ˢ 12	„ 26	47
Various	„ 27	29
	Décadi, June 28.	
Various	„ 29	20
Various	„ 30	14
Various	July 1	24
Various	„ 2	30
Various	„ 3	19
Various	„ 4	27
Various	„ 5	28
Affair of *Toulouse*, 25, and various 10	„ 6	30
1st Conspy. *des Prisons* 58, and var.ˢ 9	„ 7	67
2nd Conspy. *des Prisons* 48, and var.ˢ 12	„ 9	60
3rd Conspy. *des Prisons* 38, and var.ˢ 6	„ 10	44
Various	„ 11	6
Various	„ 12	28
Various	„ 13	38
Various	„ 15	30
Various	„ 16	30
Affair of *Carmelite* Nuns 30, & var.ˢ 10	„ 17	40
Various	„ 19	28

* Mr. Alison says, Cécile's '*whole relations*, to the number of *sixty*, were involved in her fate, among whom were a number of young men bravely combating on the frontier in defence of their country!' (ii. 321.) Thus making the Montmorencies, St. Maurices, and St. Amaranthes cousins of poor Cécile—confounding with her case the persons who were tried the same day in the *other* court, and magnifying her two imprisoned brothers into a *number* of young men who were, at one and the same time, *bravely combating* on the frontier and dying on the scaffold in Paris! In fact only three of the fifty-four were relations of hers.

Class.	Date. 1794.	Numbers executed.
Various	July 20	14
Various	„ 21	27
Consp.r *du Luxembourg* 24, and var.s 22	„ 22	46
Consp.r of the *Carmes*, 46, and var.s 9	„ 23	55
1st Conspiracy *St. Lazare* 25, Affair *La Muette* 11	„ 24	36
2nd Conspiracy *St. Lazare* 25, and various 12	„ 25	39
Princesse de Monaco, &c. 31, third conspiracy *St. Lazare* 23	„ 26	54
Various	„ 27 (*9th Thermidor*)	42
Total		2625
Robespierre, &c.	July 28	22
Robespierre's accomplices	„ 29	70
Ditto	„ 30	13
Total victims of the Revolutionary Tribunal of the 10th of March		2730

It is observable of this *second*, or, as we shall henceforth call it, the Revolutionary, Tribunal, as it was of the *first*, that, notwithstanding the pretended urgency of the numerous and important cases that were said to be pressing for trial, there was a delay of three weeks in bringing it into operation, and then, as we shall see, the business which it had to do was at first comparatively trifling. It is clear, therefore, that this Tribunal, like the former, was established for some secret and *prospective* object, of which the supposed urgency of the cases and imputed violence of the people were mere colourable pretences. That object, we are satisfied, could be no other than to place in the hands of the Jacobins an instrument for the intimidation, and, if necessary, for the destruction of their political antagonists in the Convention itself.

The Tribunal at first preserved some of the usual forms of criminal justice—there was a jury of accusation (answering to our grand jury); the prisoners were interrogated, and had notice of the charges, and some interval was allowed to prepare a defence—they were also allowed counsel—but these wholesome forms were, from the outset, very loosely followed; they soon became mere fictions, and were by degrees altogether suppressed.

The first and most effective abuse of the forms of law was this. The Convention had decreed that 'all conspiracies and plots (*conspirations et complots*) tending to disturb the state by a civil war, by arming citizens against each other or against the exercise of any lawful authority,' should be punished with death. Under the vague and comprehensive terms of '*conspiracy*' and '*plots*,' and '*tending*'—words, writings, and even thoughts might be included; and the first question, therefore, generally submitted to the jury was, whether there had existed a counter-revolutionary *conspiracy*. This question was seldom accompanied by any evidence of the fact—it was taken for granted that no one could doubt the existence of a very extensive disapprobation of some one or other of the events or doctrines of the Revolution, which, of course, was termed a general conspiracy; and therefore the reply of the jury, in the vast majority of cases, was, '*Il est constant*'—It is undeniable * 'that a conspiracy or plot has existed tending'—'to excite civil war'—or 'to re-establish royalty,' or 'to vilify the Convention,' or 'to insult the representatives of the people, or the national cockade,' or such like.

The fact of the grand crime—which gave the Tribunal jurisdiction—being thus settled, the next step was to include the accused person in the guilt of these undeniable conspiracies; and that was done—not by proving the party to have any connexion with, or even knowledge of, the alleged conspiracy, but—by alleging against him or her some isolated facts or incidental expressions of a counter-revolutionary *tendency*, which being stated to the jury—with, in the earlier cases, more or less of what was called evidence, but latterly with little more than the assertion of the Public Accuser—the jury seldom failed to answer, 'Yes; A. B. is convicted of having been the *author* OR *accomplice* of the said conspiracy;' and, by this simple process and this single formula, nearly 2700 persons, of all ranks, ages, and conditions, were sent, on the most opposite charges, and under an innumerable variety of circumstances, to the same scaffold. Fouquier said on his trial that near 900 were acquitted in the same period. We cannot trace anything like this number of acquittals, but we know that some that we do find were collusive and preconcerted—sometimes

* The word '*constant*' has no exact synonyme in English—it is derived from the Latin phrase *constat*, and means *certain, undeniable, evident*.

to shelter spies, sometimes to save appearances, sometimes, there is reason to believe, by favour or corruption. An acquittal, where Fouquier wished to convict, was, as we shall see, a very extraordinary case.

The following is an early instance of the kind of cases on which this extraordinary Tribunal was at first chiefly employed:—

On the 18th of April, 1793, Joan Leclerc, a cook-maid, aged fifty-six, was taken up for being drunk and noisy in the street and for having cried 'Vive le Roi' and talked of news from Lyons, and of her two sons in Custine's army. She answered, that she remembered nothing about 'Vive le Roi'—that any news she talked of she must have read in the newspaper—and that she could not have mentioned her two sons in Custine's army, because she never had a child. Her master, and many other witnesses, deposed in her favour, and that she never had been suspected of being 'a counter-revolutionist' (!)—but the jury found unanimously that,—

'1°. *Il est constant*—that *language* tending to provoke the *massacre* of the National Convention, the dissolution of the Republic, and the re-establishment of royalty in France, has been held at different times in *certain coffee-houses*, and particularly on the 7th of March, in the *guard-house* of St. Firmin; 2°, and that Joan Leclerc is convicted of having used this language.'—*Bull.* ii. 43.

Here it will be observed that poor Joan is made responsible for *language* alleged, not proved, to have been held on *several occasions*, where she was not present—by *nameless* persons, of whom she had never heard, in *certain coffee-houses*, where she had never been, because, when shut up *one* night in a *guard-house*, she had talked some tipsy nonsense; and on this wonderful conviction she was next morning guillotined in the Place du Carrousel, as '*convaincue de conspiration*;' and the sentence scrupulously adds that the *property* of poor Joan was confiscated to the benefit of the Republic!

Ten days later (27th of April), one Charles Mingot, a hackney-coachman of Paris, was tried for having resisted the city-watch, who, at midnight on the 2nd of April, had ordered him to quit a public-house where he was making a noise, and for using, when taken to the lock-up house for the night, indecent and seditious language. The witnesses admitted that he was drunk—so drunk that the guard was forced to put him into a place of confinement,

where in his rage he had used the offensive language. He was condemned and executed the same evening! Such were the important personages, and such the menacing conspiracies, which occupied the first month of that Tribunal whose instant creation had been extorted from the Convention by the insurrection of the 9th and 10th of March!

While the Tribunal was thus employed on trivial and obscure cases, which gave the lie to the pretences on which it was created, and looked rather like the pastime of the Tribunal—*pelotant en attendant partie*—its real cause, the struggle between the Girondins and Jacobins, continued to rage with awful and hourly-increasing violence; and, before the Tribunal was three weeks old, the Girondins made the false move of sending Marat to be tried before it for some incendiary passages in his journal. The natural result was that not only was Marat acquitted, but the Tribunal accompanied its verdict with triumphal honours; and Marat, crowned—literally—with civic garlands, was brought back on the shoulders of his sanguinary mob to the *tribune* of the Convention, to renew with increased audacity and effect his denunciations against the intimidated majority.

After this affair, which cemented the alliance between the Mountain and the Tribunal, the latter became visibly bolder, and was supplied with a few cases of greater importance, though it still continued to receive many of the most trivial character. Indeed, during the first six months of the Tribunal, there were but four trials of any political note—those of the Generals Miacsinski and Davaux, in May, 1793, as accomplices of Dumouriez—of Charlotte Corday, in July, for the assassination of Marat—and of General Custine, in August, for the loss of Mentz. The evidence against all the Generals seems vague and insufficient, and Custine's case, being a question of military opinion, should have been tried by court-martial; but, as the forms of justice were not grossly violated, and as the alleged crimes would, if proved, have been capital, however tried, we have no observation to make on those cases. Nor need we repeat the details of that personal and mental torture inflicted for three days and nights on the Queen, to the well-known horrors of which we are glad to have nothing to add. We shall only observe that the more we consider her case the more satisfied we are that she was sent to the Tribunal, not from any feeling of either revenge or alarm that she could *then*

have personally excited, but because, in the dark and mysterious councils of Robespierre, it was calculated that her fate would in some way implicate and facilitate the real object for which this Tribunal had been erected—the immolation of his Girondist antagonists and rivals.

It was on the 2nd of June, 1793, that the great struggle in the Convention ended in favour of the Jacobins, by a decree of provisional arrest against all the Girondin leaders; but it was not till late in October that the victory was consummated by their trial and execution. Robespierre had preluded his attack on the Girondins in April, 1793, by a proposal to send Marie Antoinette for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. This was then negatived, the Girondins having still the majority in the Assembly. But the Jacobins had now the majority, and Robespierre, evidently with the same idea, again prefaces the execution of the Girondins, by sending the Queen to the scaffold. We do not pretend to explain the secret connexion that Robespierre's jealous and sanguinary mind may have seen between these events, we only notice the fact. The Queen was executed on the 19th, and the Brissotins on the 31st of October, 1793. Of about fifty deputies originally proscribed twenty-nine had escaped into the departments, where some of them perished by the guillotine, and others, more miserably, by suicide or starvation: some, like Louvet, Lanjuinais, and Isnard, were so fortunate as to conceal themselves till the tyranny was overpast. All had been outlawed as flying from justice, and when two of them, Gorsas and Rabaud St. Etienne, were taken and brought before the Tribunal of Paris, they were, on a mere identification of their persons, handed over (*livrés*) to the executioner, without further formality—Gorsas on the 7th of October, three weeks before, and Rabaud on the 5th of December, a month after, the death of the main body of their friends. Twenty-one remained in the prisons of Paris, and were now brought to trial. These were—

Brissot	Vergniaud	Gensonné
Duperret	Carra	Gardien
Valazé	Duprat	Sillery (Genlis)
Fauchet	Ducos	Fonfrede
Lasource	Duchâtel	Beauvais
Mainvielle	Lacaze	Lehardy
Boileau	Antiboul	Vigé.

Into all the details of this long and important trial we cannot enter, but some must not be omitted. The first and most prominent fact is, that of the intentions and designs with which they were charged the prisoners were wholly innocent—the indictment, the work of the Convention itself, was a tissue of the most extravagant perversions. Of political errors and of worse than political crimes the whole public career of the Girondin party was but too fruitful; but the charges brought against them by their Jacobin conquerors were not merely untrue, but the very opposite of what impartial justice might have alleged against them. 'If they had, during the whole revolution, taken the extreme popular side, it was,' says this extraordinary specimen of revolutionary logic, 'only the better to conceal their aristocracy—if they promoted the declaration of war, it was only because they were the hired agents and tools of *Pitt*—if they drew up and proposed the famous petition of the *Champ de Mars*, it was only to afford Lafayette an excuse for firing on those who should sign it—if they made a murderous assault on the King in his palace on the 20th of June, it was only to create a public sympathy in his favour when they proposed his suspension, it was to preserve his authority—and when they voted his death, it was only a hypocritical device to save his life.' This is an unexaggerated summary of some of the principal charges of the act of accusation, and the evidence in support of them was of a corresponding character. The witnesses were all members of the Convention or of the *Commune* (or Common Council of Paris)—and did not conceal but rather indeed boasted of their personal hostility to the parties. The very *names* of the witnesses would suffice with posterity for the acquittal of the accused. These were:—Pache, Chaumet,* Hébert, Chabot, Montaut, Deffieux, Leonard Bourdon, Duhem, and Fabre *d'Eglantine*.

There were one or two other persons called to explain minor points, but they hardly deserve the name of witnesses, and indeed would not be worth noticing, but for a circumstance relating to one of them which is strongly characteristic of the times. This was the *Minister* of Finance of the day, one *Destournelles*. When asked, as usual, his name—he hesitated:—

"'Is it indispensably necessary that I should give the *pre-name* that I received at my *birth?*"'

* More frequently but erroneously called Chaumette.

He was afraid to say *Christian* or *baptismal* name.

'President: "Yes."

'Witness: "I do so with regret—but—that *pre-name* is—*Louis*."'—*Bulletin*, iii. 171.

And then the poor wretch goes on to apologise for his family name of *Destournelles*, 'which might seem to fall under the decree against feudal names, but which,' he protests, 'is perfectly untainted by *feudality*.' How completely must *terror* have filled up every chink in social life when we find one of the *Ministers* of the Republic thus hesitating to answer to his own name!

The style in which the nine principal witnesses—nine as consummate villains as the Revolution produced—gave their evidence, as well as the evidence itself, was consistent with all the rest. They stated no facts, they produced no documents, but addressed the jury successively in long, vague, and inflammatory harangues, such as no hostile *advocate* would have been so shameless as to employ.

But in spite of all their zeal, they had no facts to produce, and the accused—though their defence was curtailed and embarrassed by many difficulties—had the best of the argument—for it really was a debate, and not a trial. The Tribunal—quite ready to convict—would have cared little about proofs, but the public began to show some interest in behalf of the oppressed: and then followed a series of proceedings that exceed all the rest in impudent injustice. On the 29th, the sixth day of the trial, the Jacobin Club sent a deputation to the Convention, complaining of these delays, and proposing that it should

'1st. Free the Revolutionary Tribunal from those forms which stifled the conscience of the jurors, and

'2nd. Pass a law authorizing jurors to declare when they are satisfied.

'Then, and then only, adds the petition, traitors will be baffled and *terror will be the order of the day*.'—*Moniteur*, 30*th Oct.* 1793.

The Convention, on the motion of Osselin, a furious Jacobin, who had been president of the first Tribunal, concurred, and ordered him *to prepare immediately* a decree for the latter object. Osselin hastened to do so, but his draft Robespierre thought too vague and *discretionary*; and on his amendment the decree was passed, after a slight resistance from the *amour propre* of Osselin, in the more precise and decisive form, that

'when any trial should have lasted three days, the judge should ask the jury whether their conscience were satisfied, and if they replied in the negative, the trial was to proceed until they should declare themselves satisfied.'—*Moniteur*, 30*th Oct.*

While these proceedings were going on—something still more extravagant occurred—*a letter from the Tribunal to the Convention!* Of this letter no mention is made in the *Bulletin*—nor in any other account of the trial that we have seen. Thiers does not notice it, nor of course Mr. Alison; but we find it in the debates of the Convention, and it so forcibly characterises the zeal of the Tribunal that we cannot omit it.

'The slowness of the proceedings of our Tribunal obliges us to submit to you some observations.

'Five days have already been consumed, and nine witnesses only have been examined; each, in making his deposition, thinks it necessary to give a history of the whole Revolution [this was true enough]; then the accused answer the witnesses, and the witnesses reply in their turn, and so they get up discussions which the *loquacity* of the accused renders very long; and then, in addition to these individual debates, shall we not have each of the prisoners insisting on making a general defence? This trial, therefore, will never be finished. But moreover, we ask, *why any witnesses at all?* The Convention—the whole Republic are the accusers in this case—the proofs of the crimes of the accused are evident. *Every one has already in his conscience a conviction of their guilt.* But the Tribunal can do nothing of itself—it is obliged to follow the law. It is for the Convention itself to *sweep away all the formalities which trammel our proceedings.*'—*Ib.*

'Upon this, Billaud-Varenne reminds the Convention of the original discussion on the *title* of the Tribunal, and proposes now to confer on it the title of REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL; and so it was decreed; and certainly the peculiar merit and effect of the title '*revolutionary*' cannot be better explained than by the foregoing representation of the Tribunal itself.

This shocking picture would be incomplete if we did not exhibit the finishing touch of mean and cowardly hypocrisy with which the trial ended.

We have just read the extraordinary letter of the Tribunal. We have seen that their consciences were not merely *satisfied* but saturated and *fatigued* with conviction—their verdict was ready, and waiting only permission to burst from their lips; and yet when on the morning of the 30th, the law they had thus secretly

solicited was read to them in Court and they were invited to declare 'whether their conscience was sufficiently satisfied'—they modestly answered 'No'—and proceeded with the phantom of a trial. But at two o'clock in the afternoon the Court adjourned for three hours, and at its reassembling, the jury, having overcome its squeamishness, declared itself satisfied, and condemned the whole of the prisoners!

At this moment a groan was heard, and one of the prisoners was observed to fall—it was Valazé, who had stabbed himself; and Fouquier, that the guillotine should not be defrauded of its prey, proposed that the corpse should be guillotined with the rest—but that shocked even the chief and hitherto unflinching minister of death—President Herman—who, however, consented to the compromise of directing the body to be dragged to the place of execution in company with, and under the eyes of, Valazé's dying friends.

With whatever offences the Girondins may be chargeable—and of many and grave ones they were unquestionably guilty—it is impossible to read the history of their persecution without something akin to pity for them, and unmixed indignation against their accusers and their judges. Nor do we wonder that the partizans of the Revolution,* anxious to find some of its founders entitled to anything like commiseration, should have been ready to exalt these weak and presumptuous, but unfortunate intriguers into heroes and martyrs.

It may seem almost superfluous to say anything of the condemnation of Madame Roland, now universally admitted to have been a wanton murder; but it will give a livelier and a more accurate idea of this horrible injustice if we quote from the *Bulletin* the exact charges and evidence on which she was condemned. The indictment begins, in the usual way, with reciting Brissot's '*conspiracy*,' and then proceeds:—

'Roland, having fled, left his wife in Paris, who, *although in prison*, corresponded with the conspirators who had retired to Caen, by the medium of one of them, Duperret, who had remained at Paris. . . . The proofs of this correspondence are:—1st. A letter of Barbaroux to Duperret, dated from Lisieux, the 13th of June last, in which we read, "*Don't forget our estimable friend the Citoyenne Roland, and try to give her some comfort in her prison by sending her any good news you can.*

* This was written before M. Lamartine published his *History of the Girondins*, obviously designed as a precursor to his desperate and deplorable attempt to revive in 1848 the republic of 1793.

2nd. Another letter from the same to the same, dated from Caen, in which we read, "*You will, I hope, have executed my commission in endeavouring to convey some consolation to Madame Roland. Pray, pray, endeavour to see her—tell her that not only her twenty-two proscribed friends* [the Girondins], *but every honest man feels for her misfortune. I enclose a letter for that amiable woman. I need not tell you that you only can execute this important commission; and you must endeavour by all means to get her out of prison and into some place of safety.*" '—*Bull.* iii. 300.

A third letter in the same style followed, but it is not worth extracting; then came a note written *by* Madame Roland to Duperret, on the 24th of June, to tell him 'that after having been released from the Abbaye she had been again arrested and sent to Ste. Pélagie;' and two or three other notes or letters, of which but one is given:—

'News of my friends is the only happiness I can now enjoy. I am indebted to you for it. Tell them that my knowledge of their courage, and of what they are capable of doing in the cause of liberty, satisfies and consoles me for everything. Tell them that my esteem, my attachment, and my best wishes, still follow them.' —*Ib.* 300.

This was the whole documentary evidence; the verbal testimony is summed up as follows:—

'Several witnesses deposed to have seen, at the table of the accused, Brissot and his accomplices ridiculing the opinions of the most enlightened members of the Mountain—that she had about Paris confidential agents who reported to Roland what passed in public places—and that she kept up a correspondence and understanding with the principal conspirators, of whom she was the life and soul.'—*Ib.*

And of these last vague words the only proof was the innocent notes that we have quoted; and on this evidence this high-spirited and—spite of her revolutionary delusions—interesting woman was launched, on the 9th of November, 1793, into—*immortality!* We do not pretend, and, indeed, it would require, not an essay, but many volumes, to exhibit, in all their absurd and all their odious details, the incredible meanness to which the cruelty of the Tribunal sometimes descended, and the audacity of crime to which it more frequently rose. We must content ourselves with producing enough to place beyond all doubt the true character of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and of the Revolution itself, of which it was a natural emanation.

For some time the majority of graver affairs were questions arising out of the laws against emigration: these laws were in themselves vexatious, inquisitorial, and sanguinary; but the extension which they received from the zeal, corruption, or folly of the Tribunal, was enormous. The following instance is by no means the strongest, but the first that occurs. A gentleman of the name of Mauny had, through the usual means of a broker—one Beaulieu—bought a large sum of gold coin, and it was alleged that he had done so *with the intention* of sending it to his emigrant relations. There seems no reason to doubt the fact; but, supposing the whole charge to be proved, the doctrines held by the Court were still very extraordinary. In his zeal for his clients, the official defender (for they were then allowed) had the courage to say to the jury:—

'I confess to you that if I had a son who had emigrated—nay, who was in arms against his country—I confess, I say, that, while deploring and detesting his conduct, I could not, if I heard that he was in want and misery, leave him without help.'

In reply to this, the judge, Dufriche—the least inhuman of the whole bench, and who for that reason was soon after dismissed—reprimanded the advocate for raising 'weak, *idle*, and *unseasonable* discussions;' adding, as the apt and seasonable precedent that should guide the jury in this case:—

'Brutus also was a father;—the son of Brutus erred for a moment;—Brutus condemned and executed his son.'—*Bull.* ii. 113.

This silly pedantry had not even the merit of creating surprise, for *Egalité* had used it in the Convention a few days before with reference to his son—afterwards King Louis Philippe—who had emigrated with Dumouriez.

Several of the jury chose to make set speeches on this occasion. One of them lays down the doctrine—on which, we suppose, the broker was convicted—

'Any man who in times of revolution prefers his own interest to the general advantage, and *who speculates in the public funds with a view to his own profit*, must be considered as a bad citizen, and *treated* as a counter-revolutionist.'—*Ib.* 116.

The result was that Mauny, as succouring an emigrant, and Beaulieu, who furnished the bills of exchange, were so *treated*, and, on the 10th of May, 1793, sent to the scaffold. We were

at first somewhat surprised at all these extraneous speeches from the judge and the jurors, in one of the few cases in which they appeared to have something like an excuse for a conviction. But we have since found a clue to the enigma. Madame Roland, now herself in prison, and sincerely, though rather tardily, indignant at the abuses practised in the name of liberty, gives us some insight into the case:—

'Fouquier-Tinville, *Accusateur-public* of the Revolutionary Tribunal, notorious for his immorality and for his impudence, is in the habit of taking bribes from the parties he has to deal with. *Madame Rochechouart* paid him 80,000 francs (3200*l.*) for Mony [Mauny] the emigrant; Fouquier touched the money, but Mony was executed; and Madame Rochechouart was warned that if she opened her mouth she should never see daylight again.'*—*Mém. de M. Roland*, vol. ii. p. 222.

If this was true, it is probable that all this speechifying was a parade, got up by Fouquier, to account to Mauny's friends for his failure to earn his bribe.

It is on this trial that we first meet a juror who soon became a very prominent figure in the Tribunal, and whom we must introduce to the special notice of our readers—the citizen Le Roy. He, too, before delivering his verdict against Mauny and Beaulieu, thought it necessary to address the audience in the following harangue:—

'Citizens,—Of twenty-four jurors named to form the Revolutionary Tribunal, eleven only have had the courage to save their country, and to expose themselves to the clamour of calumny, and even to *poison* and the *knife* of the assassin. I am come here with a heart pure and burning with the holy love of liberty; and, whatever be the lot that the foes of the Revolution may prepare for me, I shall never deceive the national confidence.'—*Bull.* ii. p. 114.

This *Le Roy*, who about this time exchanged his obnoxious surname for that of *Dix-Août*, was upwards of fifty years old, very deaf and very dirty, wearing a greasy red cap and the meanest apparel, and altogether so remarkable, even among the *Sans-*

* We shall see presently that the Duchess du Châtelet—here called (titles being abolished) by her maiden name of *Rochechouart*—was herself executed soon after (21st April, '94), for some alleged correspondence with emigrants, but we cannot discover how she should have been interested for Mauny, or been in any way concerned in that affair:—all that seems certain is, that there was—thus early in the career of the Tribunal—*corruption, fraud,* and *murder!*

culottes, for squalidity of appearance and grossness of language, that, in the '*Portraits de Personnages Célèbres de la Révolution Française*' (4 vols. 4to., Paris, 1796), he was selected as the most perfect type of a *Revolutionary juror!*

Well: this man, before the Revolution, was, or pretended to be, a *noble*, and called himself *Le Marquis de Montflabert*. He certainly was a man of fortune, and was suspected of having adopted this extreme *sans culotterie* for the purpose of saving his head and his property. He miscalculated, indeed, and eventually lost both; but for fifteen months he exercised a fearful influence over the lives and fortunes of thousands—not merely as a juror, but occasionally as something even worse.

He was, it seems, a landed proprietor in and near the little town of Coulommiers, about five-and-twenty miles eastward of Paris; and had, like many others of the resident gentlemen, been elected *maire* where he had formerly been *seigneur*.

Now, we find in the *Liste des Condamnés* about the end of December, 1793, and the beginning of 1794, the condemnation and execution of thirty inhabitants of Coulommiers—a large contribution from so small a place, in a country so undisturbed and so contiguous to the capital. When we came, however, to read Fouquier's trial, we obtained a glimpse into this affair. Wolf, one of the clerks of the court, accuses *Dix-Août* of

'having put to death more than thirty persons belonging to *Coulommiers*, of which he was mayor: he acting in this affair the parts both of *prosecutor* (dénonciateur) *and witness*.'—*Procès Fouquier*, No. xxiv.

On this point *Dix-Août* made at that time no answer; but when subsequently Paris, the chief clerk of the court, repeated the same accusation, he

'denied that he had denounced the inhabitants of Coulommiers; forty witnesses, he said, were heard in that affair, and that *he* had declared himself the official defender of some of the parties.'—*Procès Fouquier*, No. xxvi.

In the absence of any details of the proceedings in these cases, and wanting so large a portion of the evidence on Fouquier's trial, we cannot venture to pronounce decidedly on the extent of *Dix-Août*'s guilt in this particular affair; but several incidental circumstances, scattered through the *Moniteur*, the *Procès*, and other publications (but which we have not room to bring together),

strongly corroborate the evidence of Wolf and Paris. One circumstance, however, deserves notice. The President, in summing up the case, told the jury that it was specially recommended by the Committee of Public Safety (*Mem. of Lenart*, p. 250).

It may seem extravagant to suppose that in any possible state of national insanity a town could be thus delivered up to the proscription of an individual; but we have, unfortunately, more than one clear and indisputable instance of that character.

The case of Orleans is well known, in which that city was declared in a state of siege, and nine of her most respectable citizens were transferred to the Tribunal at Paris, and were there sacrificed on the 16th July, 1793, to the vengeance of Leonard Bourdon, one of the Conventional Proconsuls, who, passing through Orleans on a more distant mission, had been wounded in a night squabble, which he himself had provoked, by some of the town's people, who neither knew his name, his person, nor his dignity.

To this affair, and of the frightful state of Paris, even in that early day of the proceedings of the Tribunal, we have the indisputable testimony of Madame Roland:—

'Paris, like another Babylon, sees its brutalised population either running after ridiculous public *fêtes*, or surfeiting themselves with the blood of crowds of unhappy creatures sacrificed to its ferocious jealousy, while selfish idlers still fill all the theatres,* and the trembling tradesman shuts himself up, not sure of ever again sleeping in his own bed, if it should please any of his neighbours to denounce him as having used unpatriotic expressions, or blamed the affair of the 2nd of June [the fall of the Girondins], or lamented the *Victims of Orleans*, sent to death without proof of the imputed intention of an assassination, which itself never was committed, on the execrable Bourdon. O my country! into what hands are you fallen!'—*Mém.*, ii. 147.

Alas! no hands or head had been more busy than her own in preparing these atrocities.

But a still worse case, because there was in it no *fact* to build upon, as there had been in the squabble at Orleans, was that of Pamiers—eleven altogether innocent citizens were sent up from that remote town to the Parisian butchery, and there sacrificed on the 11th of July, 1794, by a most infamous and complicated con-

* At this time, and indeed all through the *Terror*, we find thirteen or fourteen theatres advertised daily in the 'Moniteur.'

spiracy between Fouquier and Vadier, a member of the Committee de *Sûreté Générale*, who belonged to Pamiers, and was at private enmity with the accused parties. On this case there is no doubt, for Vadier's instigatory letters to Fouquier were produced on his trial. (*Proc. Fouq.*, No. xliv., xlv.)

We find several other of what we may call *local* cases, which we have little doubt, if we could obtain a glimpse of the evidence against them, would turn out to be of the same class as this of Pamiers. We shall give the heads of some of them, with the sentences, which only make us regret the more that we have not some traces of the evidence on which they could be founded.

Conspirateurs de Clamecy—Fifteen condemned and executed, 15th March, 1794—convicted, amongst the usual charges, of

'having practised manœuvres tending to assassinate the people, and *especially on the 10th of August*, 1792.'—*Liste des Condamnés*, No. 460 to 482.

The poor people of Clamecy accomplices, in March, 1794, of the Swiss Guards at Paris on the 10th August, 1792!

'*Affaire de Dijon*'—20th April, 1794, Six condemned

'for having, *in the prison* of Dijon, where they were confined as "suspected," practised manœuvres and uttered language against the Republic,' &c.—*L. d. C.*, No. 672 to 677.

The '*Affaire de Pommeuse*'—notwithstanding its comprehensive title, seems to have been the affair of a single family of six persons condemned for

'having entertained correspondence and intelligence with the enemy, and for having, in *the impossibility of sending them money* (numéraire), buried or hidden it (*enfoui*), together with quantities of assignats and jewels.'—*L. d. C.*, No. 804 to 809.

Here the impossibility of sending money, notes, or jewels to a party was alleged as a proof of communications with them, and an old gentleman and lady, an accidental visitor, a chaplain, and two domestic servants were put to death because the master and mistress had in troublesome times chosen to hide some of their own money and jewels.

There are several other suspicious local '*affaires*,' but we shall conclude this head with the case of an alleged riot at Rouen during the King's trial. It will be recollected that there were great

debates in the Convention as to whether the sentence should or should not be submitted to the ratification of the People. A petition to the Convention in favour of the appeal was proposed at Rouen, and a merchant and a printer of that city were forward in obtaining signatures. Several persons—or, as the indictment calls it, an *attroupement*—assembled on the Place de la Rougemare, in Rouen, to sign this petition; and for this offence nine of them were sent to Paris, and there tried and executed, *nine months after the alleged riot;* and these nine political victims were the merchant and the bookseller, a miller, two tailors, two servants, a sempstress, and a *chimney-sweep!* (*L. d. C.* No. 74 to 82.)

Amongst the female champions of the Revolution was a certain Olympe de Gouges,* wife or widow of one Aubry, whose name she would not take, though their son did; she was what is called a *femme de lettres*, and wrote some dramatic pieces. Early in the Revolution she threw herself headlong into politics, devoted herself to Mirabeau and *Egalité*, was a prominent figure in the galleries of the Assembly and the Jacobins, a great writer of *placards*, and the foundress of Female Clubs. As the Revolution got out of the management of her party, her zeal, like that of the other Orleanists, began to cool, and the '*affiches*' which she was in the habit of issuing assumed a tone of moderation which, under this new reign of Liberty, could not be tolerated; and, accordingly, she was on the 3rd of November accused of having printed one called *Les Trois Urnes, ou le Salut de la Patrie*, and written others 'in opposition to the wishes expressed by the whole nation.' To this she answered that all her works were of the purest republicanism, and that this one of *Les Trois Urnes* had *not* been '*affiché*.' To which it was replied, that this was only because the printer refused to '*afficher*' it, but that *she* had *published* it by sending a copy *to her son*, the adjutant-general of one of the armies—and thereupon she was condemned and executed. We should have hardly thought it worth while to single out this case from thousands of even greater injustice, but for its still more shocking epilogue. We have before

* Many years before the Revolution she had already made a noise. We read, in the 'Mémoires de Bachaumont,' 19th January, 1786, after an account of a quarrel between her and the players —'Madame de Gouges is a very fine woman—but quick, and even violent in her temper. She is now rather on the decline, but still handsome; she has, however, given up gallantry for literature, and resigns the triumphs of Cytherea for the more permanent honours of Parnassus.'

us an 'Address to the Public' from that son—*Adjutant-General Aubry*—dated Chalons, 8th of November, 1793, the fifth day after his mother's death—to explain his '*rapports avec cette femme*,' and to disclaim all sympathy with her or her writings—nay more, to applaud her execution! Our readers would almost doubt such cowardly and unnatural depravity, if we did not quote them a few lines of this matricidal manifesto:—

'Je jure donc ici, mes concitoyens, que je désavoue hautement les écrits séditieux et contre-révolutionnaires de Olimpe Gouges; que je ne la réconnois plus pour *avoir été* (!) ma mère, et que *j'approuve le jugement du Tribunal Révolutionnaire*.—Elle est morte comme contre-révolutionnaire—Eh bien! Vive la République!' *

It has been said that in those dreadful days honour and humanity took refuge in the armies; but this circumstance proves that the terror had power to extinguish in the armies the sentiments not only of honour and humanity, but even of nature.

On Fouquier's trial M. Ducret, one of the clerks of the court, attested that there were four classes of persons who, whatever might be the facts of the case, never could hope to escape—the rich, *ci-devant* nobles, priests, and members of the Constituant Assembly. Any one falling under any of these categories was certain of death; and he cites the following cases, on which we have not been satisfied with M. Ducret's summary statement, but have traced them through the original reports.

Madame de Nonac was convicted and executed (5th of June, 1794)

'for being author, or accomplice, of a conspiracy against the sovereignty of the people, by employing manœuvres to create a famine and alarm the public on the want of food.'—*L. d. C.* 1210.

The proof—sole proof—against her was, that some rotten eggs and rotten onions were thrown into the dung-pit of her farm-yard as unfit for use!

Madame de Marbœuf, widow of the Marquis de Marbœuf, was convicted and executed

'for being the author or accomplice of a conspiracy against the safety of the French people, in *denaturalising* the product of many acres of

* He addressed a similar statement to the Convention.—*Moniteur*, 16th Nov., 1793.

land in the district of Champs, by *causing it to be sown with lucerne instead of corn*—in making troubles in the district, and in wishing for (*désirant*) the arrival of the Prussians and Austrians, for whom she kept up considerable provisions in her house.'—*Glaive Vengeur*, 192; *Moniteur*, 7th Feb. 1794.

The nefarious but intelligible object of this proceeding was to confiscate the very large fortune, several thousands a-year, of Madame de Marbœuf; but what shall we say to the next case?

'John Joseph Payen, *farmer*—confidant and accomplice of the said widow Marbœuf—is also convicted of the said conspiracy in ordering and superintending the *sowing of the said lucerne*, and in vexing the patriots of the said district, and is sentenced to death accordingly.'—*Ib.*

That is for sowing one kind of seeds rather than another!

M. Ducret relates an anecdote of himself which, as it bears hard either on his prudence or his integrity, may, we suppose, be entitled to credit, though Fouquier disputed it. He says that to dissipate the sad feelings that his attendance at the Tribunal gave him, he sometimes indulged in a walk into the country. One evening in July he walked out towards Issy, and there strolled into the beautiful park of the Princess de Chimay. Next day, in the Chambre du Conseil of the Tribunal, he happened to mention this charming villa to some of the judges; who observed, that 'she had emigrated.' 'Oh no,' said M. Ducret, 'she has not emigrated.' Fouquier, who was standing unseen in a corner, exclaimed—'I have been looking for her these three months.' He had now found her, and the Princess de Chimay was executed on the 26th of July, only the day before his master's fall and his own. If Ducret was not a spy and an accomplice, one cannot even after this long interval but feel a regret that M. Ducret's suburban stroll had not been postponed for a couple of days.

Another case, of which we have all the details in the 'Bulletin,' is, if possible, worse.

M. de Laverdy, aged seventy—who had been Controller-General of the Finances thirty years before, under Louis XV., but was now living in Paris in the most profound retirement—had a country-house at Gambais, about five-and-twenty miles from Paris, in front of which was a small circular basin of ornamental water, 25 feet in diameter, and, if it were full, 2 feet 3

inches deep—in which—but now the indictment must speak for itself—

'the municipal officers of the district of Monfort l'Amaury having visited the place on the 9th of October last, old style, ascertained in the most authentic manner that, in a basin situated over the parterre of the said house, they found a quantity of mud caused by rotted wheat, and they even remarked that, in this mud, there were visible several grains of wheat still sound and whole. That the said municipal officers, anxious to give to this frightful statement an undeniable character of truth, caused some of the wheat gathered out of the said basin to be baked, and that it produced a species of bread —*incapable of being eaten (!)*.

'The said municipal officers, penetrated with indignation at this crime of high treason (*lèze-nation*), which could tend to nothing else than exciting the minds of the public to the rage of despair, and thus bringing about a counter-revolution,' &c.—*Bulletin*, No. iii. p. 396.

In any other circumstances, since the institution of civil society, would such a charge have required any answer?—but M. Laverdy did answer it, and proved, by a cloud of uncontradicted witnesses, that he had not resided at Gambais for some years; that the house being empty, the parterre and basin were neglected; that it was very likely to happen that some grains of corn may have been blown into the basin and may have vegetated in the mud; that no one ever saw or heard of any corn being thrown there, either by accident or design; that his, or anyone else's, thinking of destroying grain by throwing it to rot *there*, was the most extreme absurdity, because this basin was by the side of the high road and open to all passengers; and that finally, he had not had that year a grain of *wheat* in the world, for the *whole* farm had happened to be laid down in *oats*. And all this was unanswerably proved—for the Tribunal still kept up some forms of justice - and yet the verdict was—

'1st. *Qu'il est constant* that a *plot* existed tending to deliver over the republic to the horrors of famine, in throwing into ponds or pieces of water, and causing there to rot, grain necessary to the existence of the people, and by this means to operate a counter-revolution and civil war, by *arming* the citizens against each other and against all the legitimate authorities.

'2nd. That Clement Charles Laverdy is the author or accomplice of the said facts, and condemns him to death,' &c.—*Ib.*

The good old man was executed the same day, and a fortune of from 8000*l.* to 10,000*l.* a-year was confiscated to the republic.

Here is an instance from another of those proscribed classes. Freteau had been a member of the Parliament, a leader in the Constituant Assembly, and a zealous reformer; but when he saw whither the Revolution was going, his zeal slackened, and was soon sent to expiate his visions of liberty in the dungeons of the Convention. He was brought to trial on the 16th of May, 1794, and, wonderful to say, acquitted by the casting voice of one juror; but was ordered to be removed to his own department, and *there* detained as *suspected*. His counsel, M. Sezille, anxious to get Freteau out of Paris—not only on account of the obvious danger to himself, but because his wife was far advanced in pregnancy—pressed Fouquier in the strongest manner for the certificate of the acquittal and an order for transferring Freteau to the country according to the sentence. This was not only refused, but Sezille was menaced—if he should persist in being troublesome—with the fate of Jourdeuil, the juror, whose casting vote had saved Freteau, and who was in consequence dismissed from that office and sent to jail. 'No, no,' said Fouquier to Sezille, 'you shan't have your Freteau,' and on the 14th of June Freteau was again brought to trial, and, without an attempt at evidence of any kind—without even a pretext that we can discover—condemned and executed. A few days after his wife was delivered of twins. The 9th Thermidor saved Jourdeuil to give the world a glimpse into a revolutionary jury-room. 'The discussion on Freteau's case,' said he, in his evidence on Fouquier's trial, 'was very violent [not on the alleged facts of the case, but] on his general reputation for patriotism.

'Some contended that he was a conspirator—a counter-revolutionist—that during the Constituant Assembly he had never been of *Robespierre's* opinion! On this we sent for the Moniteur, and we found that Freteau had behaved well on the question of the acceptance of the Constitution. Gerard, my fellow-juror, one of the present prisoners, told me that I was hard to convince. "*You don't know*," he added, "*that Freteau has* 60,000 *livres* (2400*l.*) *a-year*." Didier, another of the jurors, threatened me with the vengeance of *Robespierre*, when he should hear that I had acquitted Freteau, and accordingly next day at ten o'clock, I was arrested by a warrant signed Robespierre and Barrère. I was kept for three months in solitary confinement, and only escaped by the 9th Thermidor.'—*Jourdeuil's Evidence, Procès Fouq.*, No. xli.

From the execution of the Brissotins, in Oct. 1793, to March

1794, about three hundred and fifty individual cases, all, as far as we can trace their details, were murders, but at the latter date the Parisian public, and, above all, the violent revolutionists, must have been astonished at the sudden arrest and trial of a number of the bloodiest demagogues of the Commune of Paris—these were, HÉBERT, the infamous *Père Duchesne*, and still more infamous for his share in the Queen's trial—Vincent, a crazy and impudent *commis*, whom M. Thiers, by a bitter though unintentional sarcasm on the French nation, calls the *terrible*, when *horrible* is really the fittest epithet for his furious brutalities—Ronsin (a garreteer author, 'exceedingly astonished,' says Prudhomme, 'to find himself one morning General of the revolutionary army'), against whom it is made a capital charge that 'he meant to be a *Cromwell*'—Anacharsis Cloots, a mad Prussian baron—Momoro, a printer, the husband of the *Goddess of Reason;* and fourteen still more subordinate *Cordeliers*, who appeared before the Tribunal on the 21st of March, when their real crimes, so congenial with the sentiments of their judges, could not avail them against the imaginary guilt of being 'the accomplices of the British Government, and of the coalesced powers;' and even in the midst of such horrors, one can hardly help smiling at seeing the spirit and almost the very words of the evidence with which Hébert had denounced the Girondins, now retaliated on his own head. This affair was spun out over the three days; and then, as in the former case, the jury declared itself satisfied, and the president summed up—as the *Bulletin*, with incomparable *naïveté*, states—

'with a most energetic speech *against conspirators in general*, and—*without entering into the merits of any of the facts connected with the present case*—put an end to the discussion, and referred the question, in the usual form, to the jury.'—*Bull.* iv. 25..

And they were all executed the same evening—24th March, 1794.

All these people had been the friends and followers of Danton, who now co-operated with Robespierre in their destruction. By what fatality, folly, or fascination, Danton was reduced—not merely to cower under Robespierre's dictation—that may be perhaps accounted for by the innate baseness of the man—but to encourage and assist him in sending his own creatures to the

scaffold, we have never seen any satisfactory conjecture; but one is affected by a surprise more sudden than any dramatic vicissitude could produce, at seeing, on the 4th of April, within a fortnight after the execution of the *Hébertists*—while all France was indulging in transports of joy and hope that the execution of this demoralized and sanguinary faction was the seal of friendship between Robespierre and Danton, and the conclusion of the Reign of Terror—at seeing, we say, DANTON, and the *élite* of his friends—Lacroix, Camille Desmoulins, Hérault de Sechelles—arrested, and sent before the Revolutionary Tribunal. The suddenness of this mysterious proceeding—as mysterious then as, at the end of fifty years, it still is—astonished the nation, and struck all parties and all classes dumb with aggravated disappointment and accumulated terror.

For the purpose of further discrediting Danton, whose morals and integrity were already in very bad repute, there were joined in the indictment with him Fabre de l'Eglantine, Delaunay, Bazire, and Chabot, all accused of a bold pecuniary fraud, in altering, for a large bribe, a decree of the Convention relative to the East India Company: Chabot, an apostate Capuchin friar—the same fellow who had given 'eloquent and energetic' evidence against the Girondins—base in every way, had taken the bribe and betrayed his associates! As an additional degradation to the great Danton, the poetaster and swindler Fabre was placed in the *fauteuil* usually destined to the chief criminal; and Danton—the Danton of the 10th of August—of the 2nd of September—of the 10th of March—the Stentor of that famous watchword and password of the Revolution—'*l'audace, encore de l'audace, toujours de l'audace*,' was confounded, on the lower seats of *his own* Tribunal, with a gang of the meanest scoundrels. But Danton, though evidently cowed—*quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore!*—had still a mien, a voice, and a name that intimidated the Tribunal; and the president and Fouquier were, or affected to be, so alarmed at the aspect of the prisoners and *the audience*, that they wrote a most urgent letter to the Convention to relieve them from their difficulties by the same remedy that they had proposed to the Girondin case—a special decree. The decree—proposed by St. Just, the organ of the Committee of Public Safety, that is, of Robespierre—was passed without demur. It enacted that whenever prisoners

should rebel against the Tribunal, as these had done, the trial might be closed at once by the summary condemnation of the mutinous parties.

Whether Fouquier's alarms on this occasion were real, or, for some unexplained purpose, assumed, it is certain that this trial exhibited some symptoms of unusual anxiety; for, besides this decree of the Convention, Fouquier produced, in the height of the excitement, a denunciation of one Laflotte, a prisoner in the Luxembourg prison, stating that there was within the prison itself a conspiracy, headed by the wife of Camille Desmoulins then under trial, Simon, an ex-deputy of the Convention, and General Arthur Dillon, to break out, rescue the culprits at the bar, assassinate the Convention, and so forth. It would be difficult to imagine how so gross a fable could be gravely produced, if we did not know that the whole Revolution was fed, even from its cradle, with that species of food; but it is still more remarkable, that neither Laflotte's* denunciation nor St. Just's decree were brought into actual operation. They were read just before the close of the sittings on the third evening; but on the fourth morning, the law, which Danton and Desmoulins themselves had contributed to make, for curtailing trials, came into operation—the jurors declared their consciences satisfied, and all was over. So that in every step of this whole affair—the first creation of the Tribunal, the law for abridging the proceedings, the persecution of the Girondists, and the sacrifice of the Hébertists—Danton was nothing better than a dupe and a *suicide*. The verdict and sentence were not only prepared, but actually printed, before they were pronounced.—(*P. F.* xxix.) M. Thiers, who has adopted Danton as a kind of hero, endeavours to divest his behaviour before the Tribunal of some of its verbiage, vanity, and coarseness; but he cannot conceal that every word of Danton's defence of himself against Fouquier and Robespierre, is a confession of his offences against the rest of mankind. We need not repeat the well-known circumstances of his execution, but his last political words were remarkable, and have not, that we know of, been

* This infamous fellow had been, early in the Revolution, employed in diplomacy at Florence. He escaped the Revolutionary Tribunal by the baseness mentioned in the text. The 'Biographie des Contemporains' states that he was, in 1834, practising as an advocate at Douai.

noticed in any account of the creation of the Revolutionary Tribunal: 'Just a year ago I myself created the Revolutionary Tribunal, for which I now beg pardon of God and man; but I did it to prevent a repetition of the massacres of September.' This excuse, however, is but a falsehood, or, at best, an equivocation—the real motive was, that Danton, having determined on the destruction of the Girondins, thought the Revolutionary Tribunal would be a safer, and at all events a less odious instrument than a massacre; but by one or the other he meant to exterminate his antagonists, and there can be no doubt that the insurrections of the 9th and 10th of March—like those of the 5th and 6th of October, 20th of June, and 10th of August, and every other popular movement of the Revolution—not even excepting that which took the Bastille—was the premeditated work of that faction of which Danton was the chief agitator.

In this affair Herman the President not only played the open part of a passionate and partial judge, but secretly trafficked with the jury; and his zeal was rewarded by his being appointed within a day or two Minister of the Home Department: and when the ministries were soon after put into commission, he was appointed to the new office, in which he continued to be as active and almost as deadly an agent of the judicial massacres as he had been in the Tribunal—where, however, his place was amply supplied by the still more ferocious Dumas.

A few days after this (April 8th), Dillon, Madame Desmoulins, and Simon, the persons denounced by Laflotte, were brought before the Tribunal; but to them were adjoined Hébert's widow and several of his party whom Laflotte had not mentioned—Chaumet, the famous Procureur de la Commune, Gobel the apostate archbishop, Grammont the *actor* and his son, transformed into officers of the Revolutionary army and aides-de-camp to '*Ronsin-Cromwell*,' so designated in the indictment. Sixteen in all. There are two or three notable circumstances in this affair. It is the first type of those famous *Conspiracies of the Prisons* which became soon afterwards the excuse for such extensive massacres; and it is at the same time a remarkable (though not the first) instance of that system technically called by the murderers '*amalgamation*'—by which different persons were for different crimes included in the same indictment. Laflotte's evidence (which at most affected only two

or three of the prisoners, and of which all that was credible goes to prove that he himself was an infamous spy) was evidently disregarded. And it would be hard to say on what distinct fact, or combination or even pretence of facts, any one of the sixteen persons was condemned. Some of the pretexts were absolutely trivial. Against the two poor widows there was positively nothing but that they were the widows of Hébert and Desmoulins, fellow-sufferers indeed, but deadly enemies, and who in truth had contributed to bring each other to the block. Against one Barras there was no graver fact than that Momoro, beheaded with Hébert, had said that he was 'a good citizen,' and that 'Madame Hébert had no later than yesterday inquired after him'—*demandait hier de ses nouvelles*. Against Chaumet, Gobel, Grammont, and all the rest, there were numerous facts of their political life which, up to the fall of Hébert and Danton, had been accounted meritorious acts of patriotism, but were now discovered to be counter-revolutionary, and '*payés par l'or de Pitt*' to atheise and degrade the Revolution.

This execution, though much interest was felt for Lucile Desmoulins, was rendered exceedingly popular by the fall of Chaumet and Gobel. The hope, which the fate of Hébert and Co. had raised and disappointed, of a return to something like order and justice, now revived with greater confidence. This last affair seemed to close all Robespierre's accounts with all his opponents; he was now sole master of the Committees, of Paris and of France—envied rivals, wearied accomplices, and troublesome tools, had been all swept away. Even those who feared him most and trusted him least might have naturally expected that the march of death would have been, if not closed, at least slackened. But quite the reverse—it was now that it seemed to acquire new vigour and velocity: and yet, among the two thousand forthcoming victims, we cannot distinguish above half a dozen against whom Robespierre could *possibly* have had any personal or political enmity; as to all the rest, we repeat, we cannot discover nor conjecture the motive of their accumulated murders.

The process of individual accusation was now become too slow for the impatience of the despots. Single cases are, henceforward, rarely found, and the Tribunal worked by a system of *batches*:—we are reluctant to apply this trivial term to so frightful an abuse;

but it is a literal version of the French *fournée*,* and has become technical in this sad sense. In these batches were confounded all ages, both sexes, promiscuous ranks; and the operation of the Tribunal became as mechanical and certain as that of its hand-maid, the Guillotine. The two presidents received every morning Robespierre's instructions for their day's work, and Fouquier every midnight skulked to the Committees to receive their mysterious instructions for the morrow. It was proved on his trial that he had confessed to a friend that in some of these nightly walks through the streets of this city of death he had been terrified by visions of victims who seemed to crowd around him, claiming vengeance on their murderer.

The first remarkable case of this system of amalgamation seems to be that called by the general name of '*Affaire-Laborde*,' in which M. Laborde, a banker, and his partner, M. Genest, and fifteen other persons—of different ranks, ages, and sexes—were included in one indictment. Before we enter on the details of this case we must again notice a circumstance which is common to all the records we possess of the proceedings of the Tribunal—namely, the extreme negligence and inaccuracy with which the persons are designated. How many of these errors might be traced to the Tribunal itself, from the extreme haste and confusion in which the business was for the last six months evidently done—how many are those of the various copyists from the original documents, we cannot say—but certain it is that the discrepancies are very surprising. In this affair of Laborde we have examined the lists of their names in the *Bulletins du Tribunal*, in the *Liste des Condamnés*, and finally in the *Moniteur*, and there is *not one single item* on which these lists do not disagree from each other in some point of orthography or description more or less important. Names are disfigured—ages differ by twenty years—and ranks, and even sexes, are confounded.

It may be said that these clerical errors are of no importance, as they create no doubt as to the identity of the parties. That may be generally true; but there certainly were some cases in which misnomers led to the unintended execution of one person for

* 'FOURNÉE:—nom donné aux charrettées d'individus condamnés par le Tribunal Révolutionnaire à subir le supplice de la guillotine.'—*Dict. de l'Académie, Supplément.*

another—as, for instance, *Maillé* for *Maillet*—*Morin* for *Maurin*. But supposing no actual mistake of identity to have occurred, what shall we say of the state of the government and of the public mind which could tolerate such scandalous negligence in the authorised reports of the highest judicial proceedings? Even in the great index to the *Moniteur* such mistakes are frequent. Who, for instance, would look for the *Countess de Montmorin* under the name of *Taneffe?* Her maiden name had been *Canisy:* by this name, titles being abolished, she was indicted; but in some subsequent stage of the proceedings, perhaps in the warrant for execution, it was miscopied as *Taneffe*, and under this name her execution is recorded in the pages of the *Moniteur*, and repeated in its index, as well as in the *Liste* and in Prudhomme's *Dictionnaire des Condamnés*. This was a great lady of well-known family and political celebrity. Judge, then, what blunders were made with obscurer names!

Laborde and his partner Genest were opulent bankers, and the high-treason charged against them was, that

'the Convention had passed a decree which prohibited all trade with those nations which menaced the liberty of France; but Laborde and Genest, it seems [*sic*], looked upon themselves as privileged beings, to whom the decree could not apply, since they continued to pay and receive on account of foreigners as heretofore.'—*Bull.* ii. 163.

That was the guilt of the *firm:* they had continued to do the business of their bank on pain of being bankrupts. But the partners were also individually accused—Laborde, an old man of seventy-two, 'of having buried in the earth statues of *granite*, and other precious effects;' and Genest, a young man of twenty-seven,

'of having corresponded with his wife, an emigrant, and sent her ingots of silver, with the design of *drawing away the whole current* coin of the state [*afin d'épuiser* tout *le numéraire de l'état*], and of discrediting assignats!'

They were found guilty *de conspiration*, and executed.

Then come several members of a family, of which M. Hariague de Guibeville, formerly President of the Parliament of Paris, was the head, and whose chief crime seems to have been that they

were intimately acquainted with some ladies who had been guillotined three months before. The President (aged seventy-two) was charged individually

'with being informed of all the designs of the enemy. He knew, in 1792, *that England was equipping, in the greatest secrecy, a fleet against France.*'—*Bull.* ii. 163.

We need hardly say that the poor President could not have known of an armament that never existed.

La Femme Bonnaire—as the daughter of the President and widow of M. de Bonnaire, a member of the Parliament, is called—was convicted of

'sewing up with thread certain little cases of card, in which Guiboville afterwards sent money to his emigrant sons.'—*Ib.*

Two servants, Robin and Paymal, were executed for

'being penetrated with the same sentiments that characterised their masters, since they had boldly declared that they would rather see fire at the four corners of Paris than that the Republic should last.' —*Ib.*

Mademoiselle Charras de la Laurencie was accused of crimes—one of which we must repeat in the original language of these revolutionary lawgivers—English refuses to render it.

'La fille Charras était de l'aristocratie la plus *puante*—she had *worn mourning for Capet*, thereby manifesting her desire to see that just punishment avenged by our enemies.'—*Ib.*

On this guess at the *desire* which might be inferred from her wearing mourning, she also was executed. We beg leave, however, to suggest an answer (which the poor lady was not allowed to make for herself) to the only fact alleged against her—the *mourning for Louis XVI.* Our examination of the proceedings of the Tribunal has led us to discover that, towards the end of January, 1794—just the *anniversary* period of the king's murder—*Madame* de Charras de la Laurencie was arrested at her country-house near Paris (where also *Mademoiselle* de Charras resided) and dragged to the Tribunal—and thence, on the 30th of January, to the guillotine. Is it not probable that the mourning which poor Mademoiselle de Charras put on at this time was *mourning for her sister*, whose death happened thus accidentally to coincide with the anniversary of the king's?

Then came two gentlemen, MM. Mesnard de Choussi, as the *Moniteur* and *Bulletin* call them, or Menard de Choury, as the *Liste* announces them: the father, says the *Moniteur*, was aged 46—the son, the *Bulletin* states at 35, and the *Moniteur* at 37. The father is stated to have resided in the *Rue de Clichy*—of the son it is said that he lived *with his father in the Rue St. Lazare.* The son was accused of being a '*chevalier du poignard*'—an imaginary crime, or rather in truth a mere nickname for any one who visited the Tuileries before the 10th of August, and for being 'the only one of his brothers who had *not* emigrated' ('*seul de ses frères resté en France parceque son père avait fait émigrer les autres*'). Emigration being a capital offence, no other reason is given for young Mesnard's execution than his *not* having emigrated; but against either the father or the son we find not only no evidence, but absolutely not a tittle of charge except what we have quoted, and a statement that they had formerly held offices in the King's household. This *designation* of course implied that they must be Royalists, and they were both executed.

Then comes a widow lady, called in one list *M. Adrienne Gonnet*, and in another *M. Gabrielle Gonnel*, and in the third *M. A. Gontel*—but whether christened Adrienne, or Gabrielle, or surnamed Gonnet, or Gonnel, or Gontel—we cannot discover that she was accused of anything whatsoever, for none of these names occur in any part of the charges or evidence—yet she too perished with the rest.

Next we have a gentleman of the name of *Gougenot*, of whose indentity some doubt might be allowed, as one list describes him as *thirty-six*, and another as *fifty-six* years old—his crime is, that when at Easter, 1791, the king had wished to spend the holidays at St. Cloud, and, after having got into his coach at the Tuileries, was stopped by the mob—M. Gougenot,

'being maître d'hôtel to *Capet* at the time of his pretended excursion to St. Cloud, had continued to stand at the door of the tyrant's coach, and endeavoured to facilitate his escape.'—*Bull.* ii. 163.

We must not stop at such minor errors as S. *Roltat* of *Frugeat* being executed as S. *Rollat* of *Brunget*, when we find that a *gentleman*, called in one list M. *Destade* Bellecour, and in another M. *Destat*, and described as an '*officer* late in the service of Russia, and of the age of fifty-three'—is by the third list metamorphosed into a *lady*, by the name of 'Angélique-Michelle-

Destalle, of the age of thirty-three.' It appears that this person was really a male, and the sole fact alleged against him was his Russian half-pay. But the mistake as to his sex occasioned another—for having once stated him to be a lady, and finding lower down in the bloody list a woman described as the '*femme de Destalle,*' the careful *rédacteur* for once exercised some degree of judgment in correcting these unseemly blunders, and accordingly

'*J. M. Nogué, widow of the late M. Rolin d'Ivry,* and "*femme*" of *A. M. Destade*'

is transformed into

'*J. M. Noguer*, widow of one *Robin*, and *femme de chambre* to Angélique Michelle Destalle.'

The husband is thus made to die in the name of his lady, and the lady in that of an imaginary *femme de chambre* the imaginary *widow* of *M. Rolin d'Ivry,* who turns out to be her own servant Jean Robin, who was executed on the same scaffold at the same time.

And all these seventeen persons—so misnamed—so misdescribed—some without any charge—the rest on charges so vague, so various, so absurd—were tried all together on the morning of the 18th of April, 1794, and sent all together in the evening of the same day to shed their blood 'for the dogs to lick in the Place de la Révolution.'

This system of trying in *batches* afforded Fouquier the facility of looking out for *classes* rather than *crimes.* It would be difficult and tedious to fabricate evidence of individual crimes against five-and-twenty innocent gentlemen; but there was no difficulty in culling from all the prisons twenty-five gentlemen who had belonged to the old Parliaments—their very designation would be crime enough; and although they belonged to different Parliaments, as wide as Paris and Toulouse, and although nothing was or could be alleged against any one of them but their official protests against the abolition of their order, duly and regularly made, in 1790—before the new constitution—before the general amnesty, which in 1791 affected to close all the animosities of the Revolution—*twenty-five* of these venerable magistrates—whose ages amounted on an average to near *three-score* each—were tried in an hour on the morning of the 21st of April, 1794, and executed

in an hour the same evening—without even an allegation—a suspicion — that they had done anything, or even said anything, questionable since the dissolution of the *Parliaments* prior to the first Constitution.

Nor were there wanting, amidst this general injustice, individual instances of the grossest irregularity and fraud.

'In the affair of the Parliamentarians [the ex-President] Ormesson was brought into court on a *hand-barrow*, so wrapped up from head to foot that no one could see him. He was called upon two or three times, but no one could perceive whether he had heard—he himself uttered some sounds that no one could make out, and—*he was sent to execution!*'—*Proc. Fouq.*, No. xxii.

The following case is even worse:—The Committee of Public Safety had ordered that all the members of the Parliament of Paris, who had signed early in the Revolution the protest just mentioned, should be brought to trial: amongst them had been one gentleman, Guy Sallier, who fortunately was not forthcoming; the number therefore was incomplete: but there was found in one of the prisons his aged father, Henry Sallier—and though he had not signed the protest, nor could have signed it, *not having been a member of the Parliament*, he, Henry Sallier, the father, was taken and guillotined in place of Guy Sallier, the absent son. And it is not a little remarkable that, as if to cover this atrocity, the *Liste des Condamnés* registers the victim as

'670. *Henry Sallier, aged* 38, *ci-devant President of the ci-devant Parliament of Paris*'—

—Henry Sallier being above 60, and not having, as we have said, belonged to the Parliament at all. M. Guy Sallier survived the Revolution, and published in 1813, under the title of 'Annales Françaises,' the best account that we have of the share that the Parliaments had in bringing about the Revolution. M. Guy Sallier was, down to the July Revolution, a councillor of state.

On the very next day, the 21st of April, came on what is called the '*Affaire d'Espremenil*,' in which that early agitator and reformer, and two other Constituants, Chapelier and Thouret, became the victims of the storm which they had contributed to raise. Thouret a counter-revolutionist!—*he* that first advocated the abstract proposition of the *Rights of Man*—*he* that suggested the confiscation of the property of the Church—*he* that proposed

the abolition of the parliaments—the creation of a new criminal jurisdiction, and the introduction of juries—and now, like so many others, to perish by the abuse of his own reforms!

On the same scaffold, and under the same generic description of 'agents of Pitt,' appeared the venerable and illustrious Lamoignon de Malesherbes, with his daughter, Madame de Rosambo, and his grand-daughter, Madame de Châteaubriand, and her husband —three generations at one fell swoop! M. de Rosambo had been executed the *preceding day* as a Parliamentarian. M. de Châteaubriand was the uncle of the great ornament of that name whose genius illustrates France, and whose fidelity to honour and misfortune shames her. Our readers will not call this a harsh judgment on *Young France* when they read the following fact. During the Restoration a monument was erected in the great hall of the *Palais*, to the memory of M. de Malesherbes, with a bas-relief representing Louis XVI. dictating his defence to his venerable friend. The generous Revolution of July, so proud of '*all the glories of France*,' has obliterated, with its worse than Vandal hands, the bas-relief, and otherwise mutilated the monument: but this outrage only makes what remains *doubly* monumental—of the *atrocity* of the first Revolution, and the *meanness* of the second.

By the same sentence died the Duchess of Grammont (the sister of the celebrated Duke de Choiseul), the Duchess du Châtelet and her sister, under their maiden names of Rochechouart, and the Polish Princess Lubomirska; and for what crime?—'for entertaining correspondences with their emigrant relations, proved by letters found in their possession.' The letters are not given, and of what facts they might prove no statement is made, except in one case—one precious case—by which we may judge of all the rest. Against M. de Malesherbes it was charged that—

'his correspondence proves that he *only proposed* himself, and was *only accepted*, as the defender of Capet, by an intrigue hatched by Pitt with some relations of Malesherbes in London; and that in the part [*rôle*] that he acted on that occasion he was nothing but the agent of all the counter-revolutionists hired and bribed by the despot of England.—*Bull.* iv. 184.

By this specimen we may be satisfied of the value of the other evidence. Madame du Châtelet, whom we have already mentioned (p. 460, note), was accused of having corresponded with and

sent money to her son. This we have no doubt she would have done, if she had had a son, which fortunately she *had not!* * and the only letter recited in the proceedings proves not the *sending* but the *receiving* of some money. To make up, however, what might be deficient in the evidence on this part of Madame du Châtelet's case, it was worked up and completed by the following charge :—

'Moreover, the said woman, Rochechouart, had devised and planned the removal of certain documents and the titles of feudality in travelling trunks, which were stated, at the office of the coach by which they were to be sent, to contain dresses and clothes for her own use —manœuvres which prove the hopes entertained by the woman of the success of the projects of the counter-revolutionists, with whom she was associated.'—*Ib.*, 186.

With them also was executed, though visibly advanced in pregnancy, the Polish Princess Lubomirska, at the age of twenty-three. The *Bulletin* affords no other charge against her than that

'she had written to Madame Dubarri saying, *the Queen is still in the Conciergerie, and there is no idea of her being sent back to the Temple; I am, however, easy as to her fate* [tranquille sur son sort]: proof positive that she reckoned on the success of the plot which the said Archduchess of Austria [Marie Antoinette] was then carrying on to escape from justice.'—*Bull.* iv. 185.

This sentiment of commiseration she would not condescend to disclaim, as we learn from the speech of her official defender, which is fortunately preserved as a specimen of the use and value of an advocate before the Revolutionary Tribunal :—

'The Tribunal must have observed,' said the defender of the '*femme*' Lubomirski, 'the frankness and candour of her whom I am employed to defend. She has professed her invariable adherence to truth, and has told you that she would scorn to defend her life by a falsehood; and that is the most favourable observation which I can offer on her behalf.'—*Ib.* 187.

Madame de Grammont, a woman of considerable talents and high spirit, would not waste words on her own defence—her name and the figure she had made in the world were, she well knew,

* Monstrous as the proceedings of the Tribunal were, we cannot but suspect some error or confusion in the *reports*. It seems impossible to imagine such an extravagant falsehood should not have been at once refuted; but we copy the statement of the Bulletin.

inexpiable crimes: but she addressed the Court on behalf of Madame du Châtelet, whose softer manners shrunk from a conflict with her brutal accusers.

'"I am aware," said this noble-minded woman, "that it would be useless to speak about myself; but" [raising her arm over Madame du Châtelet, who sat with clasped hands and downcast eyes beside her] "what has *this angel* done?—she who never took any share in public affairs—never belonged to any party—never mixed in any intrigue—whose whole life has been spent in unostentatious benevolence? *There are others as innocent as she*—but there is no one whose personal character and habits of life render her so little liable to accusation or even suspicion."'—*Port. et Caract. de Meilhan*, p. 43.

This is very fine: we remember nothing in professed oratory more eloquent or more ingenious. While declining to speak of herself she really says all that could be said—'*there are others as innocent*'—and then the hastening to apply this gleam of self-defence to her main object—'*but no one so little liable to accusation or suspicion as* SHE!'

As they were passing to death, Madame de Rosambo saw Mlle. de Sombreuil, in one of the corridors of the prison, and said to her—'You had the happiness of saving your father—I have that of dying with mine.'

We can picture to ourselves nothing more striking, more touching—more full of all the highest elements of wonder, pity, terror, indignation and admiration, than the whole of that diversified yet awful scene. D'Espremenil and Chapelier, so lately rival idols of a mob now clamouring for their blood—the tardy remorse of Thouret—the quiet conscience beaming through the placid countenance of the aged Malesherbes, a convict where he had once been a magistrate—his daughter, *a widow of yesterday*—the young Châteaubriands happy to die together—the lofty person and commanding air of Madame de Grammont demanding justice for her gentler friend—and the sublime elevation of that beautiful young stranger scorning to prolong by a subterfuge her *double life*. Fill up the background with the tigers of the Tribunal and the furies of the Guillotine, and we have a *picture* whose dreadful, glorious reality throws into contempt and disgust all the tawdry impostures of Versailles.

The next remarkable '*fournée*' was that of the *Fermiers Généraux*—a case that deserves peculiar attention. The

Farmers General were, as our readers know, an associated body who, prior to the Revolution, farmed certain of the revenues of the state. This system ceased early in the Revolution, and their very complicated accounts had been nearly if not altogether wound up, when, in the autumn of 1793, it occurred to a Jacobin deputy, one Dupin—a fellow whose fortune, such as it was, had been made by the protection of one of them—that, as the Farmers General were very rich, something might be wrung out of them by a revision of their accounts. Forthwith, a board of inquiry was constituted, under the direction of Dupin. As was the fashion of the day, the Farmers General were, provisionally, put into a state of arrest; and the Hôtel des Fermes, their old house of business, was assigned as their place of confinement. This revision, however, dragged on and produced nothing till the spring of 1794, when—in pursuance of Barrère's celebrated axiom (quoted by Dupin himself in this case), that '*coining—battre monnaie*—was one of the legitimate uses of the Guillotine;'—it was suggested that the sending the Farmers General to the Tribunal of death and confiscation would be the shortest and most profitable mode of settling their accounts. Accordingly, on the 5th of May, 1794, Dupin read to the Convention a very long report, in which, going back ten, twenty, and even thirty years, he raised various questions on the conduct of the collective body of Farmers General, and concluded that all that were still living—to the number of *thirty-two*—should be sent for trial before the Revolutionary Tribunal. This decree passed, as everything that smelt of blood and plunder now did, without opposition. This was on Monday the 5th of May: but it was not issued by the Bureau of the Convention till next day, the 6th—nor was it officially communicated to the Tribunal till Wednesday the 7th—on which day the Farmers General were transferred to the Conciergerie to the number of *thirty-one*—Robespierre, whose slightest word was law, having personally directed that one of the original number should be spared. On the next morning, Thursday the 8th, thirty-one were brought before the Tribunal, and—not *tried*, for the only evidence produced was Dupin's report to the Convention—nor *convicted*, for even that form was, in the hurry of the Tribunal, omitted, but—suddenly sentenced and sent away to the guillotine, 'and their properties were confiscated to the benefit of the republic.' The first question naturally is, for what counter-revolutionary crime? None

at all—not even a pretence of one, for their vocation had ceased with the Revolution. Then for what other crime?—For usurious interests and extraordinary profits on their capital, and above all—the only *fact* stated—for '*having mixed water with the tobacco that was sold by their sub-agents, that it might weigh the heavier.*' And on looking into Dupin's report, we find that this damping of the tobacco by subordinate retailers dated so far back as 1776. Our readers will forgive our producing the exact words of this wonderful sentence—in which they will observe that all *dates* are carefully avoided, or rather confounded.

'*Il est constant* [the eternal formula] that there has existed a plot tending to favour by all possible means the success of the enemies of France, and expressly by exercising all manner of exaction and fraud on the French people, in mixing with tobacco water and other ingredients injurious to their health—in receiving 6 or 10 per cent. interest on money lent,' &c. &c.

Just as these thirty-one gentlemen were going to execution, it was fortunately discovered that three subordinate officers found in the Hôtel des Fermes had been by mistake included in the death-warrant; so that *twenty-eight* only were executed on that day. We shall see presently that the *three* missing Farmers General were afterwards found, and that the sanguinary Tribunal was not baulked of its allotted number.

In the course of the ensuing year, when the bloody frenzy had subsided, the massacre of these eminently innocent gentlemen attracted great attention, and their widows and children preferred public complaints of the conduct of Dupin; and from this discussion we gather some more important facts. Dupin, being charged with having been the chief mover in the massacre, endeavoured to show that he had acted only as the instrument of the Government, then so despotic that no one dared disobey it—that he had done no more than read to the Convention the report of the Commission, which contained nothing like a capital charge—(this was true enough—*but* twenty-eight gentlemen were executed on it!)—and that it was the Committee of Public Safety which had really premeditated and arranged the whole proceeding.

'What proves that the *real assassins* of the Farmers General did not care about or act under either my report, or even the decree of the Convention, is that the indictment against them had been *already prepared by* Fouquier Tinville, *before the report was made—before the*

decree was passed—and that their *death had been already settled* by the Committee of *Public Safety*.'—*Réponse de Dupin*, p. 2.

This again was all perfectly true—their death was settled before they were accused—even their sentence had been signed *in blank*, and the judicial murderers, in their haste, had forgotten to fill it up. All this Fouquier was forced to admit on his trial, when the original sentence signed by the judge was produced, but found to contain neither names of parties nor verdict of the jury! but what Dupin does not state, though equally certain, is, that instead of being an unconscious instrument, he was the active accomplice, if not the prime mover of the whole transaction—and something worse: for *before* the trial, he—an irresponsible and unauthorised individual—proceeded to seize and confiscate all the property of the accused, which even the legal officers had no right to do till after conviction. We will not waste time on the meaner crimes of robbery and thieving of which this representative of the people was guilty—for we have more serious matters to discuss.

Dupin, a few days after the murder of the twenty-eight, discovered that three of the thirty-one Farmers General who had, probably on account of their great age, been confined in a separate *maison d'arrêt*, had not been guillotined with their colleagues. He lost no time in correcting the mistake, and accordingly on the 14th of May, Charles Adrien d'Arlincourt, aged 76, Louis Mercier, aged 78, and *John Claude Douet*, aged 73, were brought before the Tribunal charged with the crimes for which their fellows had suffered, and were in consequence condemned to death with five other persons with whom they had no kind of relation, but who happened to be tried that day.

Deep as this catastrophe already appears, it goes still deeper. While these three last-mentioned gentlemen were at the bar, there was produced a *paper* (found probably by Dupin amongst those of his victims) signed *Douet*. It turned out not to be signed by the person under trial, and Fouquier Tinville sent off immediately to have his wife, Madame Douet, produced *as a witness*, to explain the *paper*. On inspecting it, she seems to have acknowledged it as her own writing, and, from being a witness, this lady, sixty years of age, was at once placed in the dock—within a few minutes sentenced—and executed that same afternoon with her husband and the rest! But what was this fatal *paper*? The sentence

of the three septuagenarian Farmers-General and five other men wholly unconnected with them had been already drawn up before *Madame Douet* was associated to their fate—perhaps before they had been tried—but it was now made to fit the whole batch by a marginal addition :—

'that *they* AND Mary Frances, the wife of the said Douet, are guilty of having, *as appears by letters found at their residence*, had an understanding and maintained *correspondence with the internal and external* enemies of the republic, and especially with *Dietricht* and *Duchâtelet*, who have already *suffered the penalties of the law*.'—*Proc. Fouq.* No. 46.

'*Dietricht*,' a gentleman of literary and scientific tastes, was a moderate reformer, and first constitutional mayor of *Strasbourg*, in which office he became, by his firm and honourable conduct, obnoxious to the Jacobins, and was sent to the Revolutionary Tribunal, and thence to the guillotine on the 28th of December, 1793.

'*Duchâtelet*' was the amiable *Duchesse du Châtelet*, who had been guillotined, as we have just seen, a fortnight before. With these two friends Madame Douet was found guilty of having corresponded by *letters*—the crime would not have been great, if true, but it was not proved—no letters were produced—but the *paper* to which the charge alluded was fortunately preserved, attached to the sentence in the archives of the Tribunal. It was a WILL, made by Madame Douet on the 22nd of January, 1793, of which we cannot resist extracting the passages on which she was so suddenly sent to death :—

'The friendship which from our childhood has attached me to *Madame du Châtelet* authorises me to request her acceptance, as a small testimony of my regard, of the satin chairs worked by my own hand.

'I request *my dear son* * *Dietricht* to accept as a token of the tender affection I bear him, a ring in which is the portrait of *his own* mother —my dearest friend.

'I leave my dear good daughter, *Madame Dietricht*, whom I tenderly love, my emerald ring set round with diamonds.

'I have nothing left which I could offer to *M. de Malesherbes* as worthy of him, but I beg him to believe that all the marks of his friendship which I have received and the proofs of esteem which he has shown me are deeply engraved in my heart, and that the most

* Madame Douet, it seems, having no children of her own, called by this affectionate title the son of a dear friend. Perhaps she had been his godmother.

sincere attachment is combined with the veneration his character inspires.

(Then followed some small bequests to her servants.) .

(Signed) M. F. B. Douet.'—*ib.*

Such, then, was the evidence (the *sole* evidence, as is expressly stated) of 'the *correspondence* with the internal and external enemies of the republic,' on which Madame Douet—a lady eminent, as even the procès states, for great and extensive charities—and eight other persons, in whose sentence she seems to have been involved and they in hers, closed the tragic episode of the *Fermiers Généraux.**

Of the angelic life and heroic death of Madame Elizabeth nothing new can be told. Our former observations (p. 278) have sufficiently exposed the brutality, the falsehood, and the impossibility of the charges made against her.

As to the twenty-four persons condemned and executed, under the same indictment and sentence, as her '*accomplices*,' let it be remembered that Madame Elizabeth had been in close custody for eighteen months; and, in fact, no attempt was made to connect her *accomplices* either with her or with one another—the charges, where charges were made, were all distinct; but against many there was not even the idle formality of an accusation. Each of these cases would, if we had space, afford an interesting detail. Of one, that of Madame de Serilly, we shall have to speak under another head; but we are tempted to give the fatal charge against the Countess de Montmorin.

'*La femme Montmorin*—widow of the villain who betrayed France throughout the Revolution, and who has undergone the terrible vengeance of the people [in the September massacres]—was the accomplice of all the crimes of her infamous husband. She *seems* also to have corresponded with the traitor La Luzerne. Her guilt is proved by her active and regular correspondence with her husband. This correspondence exists, and the accused acknowledges it.'—*Bull.* iv. 328.

Exists—acknowledged—but not produced; and a widow is

* Dupin was a fellow whose jovial manners and habits contrasted strangely with the steady and bloody ferocity of his conduct. He was saved from his deserved punishment by the amnesty of 1795, and afterwards obtained from the Jacobin Directory and their testamentary executor, Buonaparte, some small office in the collection of the revenue. We have not heard of him since the Restoration.

executed because she had corresponded with a husband who was murdered before the Republic was founded.

We now arrive at another great and fearful mystery of which no historian attempts to give any rational explanation. Every pamphlet on the Revolution is full of invectives against the monstrous law of the 22nd Prairial (10th June, 1794)—but no one condescends to inquire with what *possible object* that law was passed. It was indeed a monstrous law—but the practice before the law had been equally monstrous—or at least so nearly so that we do not understand why even such a government as that of Robespierre should have wantonly encountered the odium of putting into *literas scriptas* the habitual atrocities of the Tribunal.

This law—adopted on the report of Couthon, and therefore, as we know, the dictate of Robespierre—appeared at a most extraordinary and unexpected period. On the 8th of June (20th Prairial) Robespierre had attained the acme of his glory; he had that day, as President of the Convention, announced to the half-pleased and half-astonished multitude the acknowledgment of a SUPREME BEING. The expectations that were successively raised and disappointed by the execution of Hébert and Danton were now revived. Everybody hoped—rationally hoped—that having triumphed over every adverse faction—he was about also to moderate the effusion of blood and to bridle the anarchy. Nothing like it—only two days after this his apotheosis, he issues forth this infernal edict, which even Fouquier, who had anticipated most of it in practice, was shocked to see reduced into writing. This law consists of eighteen articles, of which we need only mention a few of the principal. It divided the Tribunal into *four* sections instead of two. This had been, our readers recollect, decreed in the preceding September; but not, we suppose, carried into practice; nor do we believe that it now was. They doubled the victims without doubling the Tribunals. It extended the jurisdiction over 'all the enemies of the people'—and gave such detailed definitions of what was an '*enemy of the people*,' that there was no word nor action of any man's life by which he might not be brought within its categories. It established for all offences *one sole* punishment, DEATH. The proofs on which the Tribunal might proceed were to be *any kind* of evidence, material or *moral*, that might 'satisfy the jury, whose conscience is to be their only rule, and their only object the triumph of the Republic and the ruin

of its enemies.' If the juries could acquire a moral conviction *without evidence*, none need be produced. As to official defenders, counsel, the law abolished the practice—'calumniated patriots will find a counsel in the jury—*the law refuses any to conspirators!*'

We look back with a kind of incredulous wonder—not merely that half-a-dozen madmen should have thought of promulgating such atrocities under the name of a law, but that a *National Assembly* should pass it, and a *Nation* not only obey but appear to applaud it—and this at a moment that seemed not merely the dawn of peace and good order, but when there was no political opponent to crush, and the Tribunal was without hesitation or hitch sending every day to the scaffold as many as the Government chose to send to its bar. Our conjecture is that this law was passed with a view, on the part of Robespierre, to an early sacrifice of the majority of his *colleagues* in the Committees, who had begun to show some symptoms of opposition; and that he and they were now vying with each other in giving to the Tribunal an increase of activity and power, which each party hoped, by and by, to turn against its adversaries.

But, whatever may have been the motive, both Robespierre and the Committees had now evidently resolved on enlarging the daily number of executions; and, for this purpose, the incident which had been produced on Danton's trial and had been a little further developed in Dillon's case, that of a CONSPIRACY IN THE PRISONS, was now reverted to. It might be reasonably predicated of any and all prisoners that they were anxious for their release, and of most of them that, with a favourable opportunity, they would not hesitate to escape. A disposition so obvious and natural would need no proof, and every individual prisoner was therefore, *ipso facto*, a ready-made conspirator—*quod erat inveniendum!* It was, no doubt, a species of insanity that would imagine such an operation—but they had a kind of method in their madness—

'Insanire parant certâ ratione modoque.'

They made their first experiment of a prison conspiracy at the Bicêtre—a great house of correction or penal prison, occupied (almost exclusively) by persons already condemned to imprisonment or irons for offences just short of capital. With such wretches it was supposed that the public would feel no sympathy,

and accordingly the Bicêtre was the first experimental scene of the *Conspiracy of Prisons.*

From Bicêtre the pretended conspiracy produced, on the 16th and 26th of June, two batches of thirty-seven and thirty-five respectively. And so entirely was it a device of Fouquier or the Committee's, that the governor of the prison deposed that the first he had heard of any conspiracy was by reading of it in a newspaper; for which evidence he and two turnkeys who concurred in it were dismissed from their posts and sent to jail.

Fouquier went to the prison in person and selected the first batch. The sentence passed upon them is worth notice. These wretched men, most of them in irons, and all in the strongest prison of France, were

'convicted of being declared enemies of the people in forming, proposing, or joining a plot, of which the object was to seize upon the guard of the Bicêtre, to force the gates of the said prison, and then to proceed to *stab with poniards* the representatives of the people—members of the Committee of Public Safety and General Surety—TO TEAR OUT THEIR HEARTS—TO BROIL AND EAT THEM—and to put the most patriotic of the representatives to death in *a barrel lined with iron nails.*'—*Moniteur*, 22nd June, 1794; *Liste des Con.*, No. vii.

Nor was this an accidental paroxysm of insanity, for the same sentence was repeated on the trial of the second batch, ten days later, with the perfectly consistent addition that the intended actors in these counter-revolutionary plans were '*the agents* of PITT!'*

Amongst these 'conspirators of the Bicêtre,' a few of whom were persons of a better class, confined for trifling revolutionary offences, there occurs one man whom we have met already in this article in far different circumstance—Osselin—formerly an advocate at the Parisian bar, afterwards the first president of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and at last deputy for Paris to the National Convention—in which character he distinguished himself by voting for the death of the King—by seconding strongly

* While the name of Mr. Pitt was thus introduced in these tragedies of real life to deceive the populace, we find that it was also introduced into farces to amuse them. The theatrical announcement nearest the above-quoted sentence, that we find in the 'Moniteur,' is—'Théâtre du Vaudeville — *Gilles George et Arlequin Pitt.*' What an idea of the state of the public mind is given by the simultaneous use of the name of Pitt at the *Tribunal Révolutionnaire* and the *Théâtre du Vaudeville!*

Robespierre's murderous proposition for abridging the defence of prisoners—and by proposing violent penalties against holding any communication with *emigrants*. But, O retribution! he somehow* fell under the displeasure of his old friends; and it was discovered that his kept-mistress had been an *emigrant*, so he was sentenced to be imprisoned at *Bicêtre* under his own law—thence again, under pretence of this conspiracy, he was brought before the judgment-seat where he had once presided, and sent unheard to death under the law he himself had advocated—and, finally, his head fell under the hatchet to which he had condemned his innocent sovereign. But this is not all—when the wretch was called upon to appear at the Tribunal—we need not say that he was entirely innocent of a conspiracy which never existed; but—well aware of what justice awaited him there, he attempted suicide by driving a nail drawn from the walls of his cell, up to the head into his own breast. Though he had failed to reach the heart, he was nevertheless dying; yet the jailors would not suffer the nail to be withdrawn, lest immediate death should follow its removal; and in this condition he was thrown violently into a cart, jolted to the Tribunal, and thence to the Place de la Révolution, where we know not whether he was yet alive, but the body was guillotined, with the nail still sticking in it.

We shall conclude this head by an extract of the evidence of Dr. Brunet, first surgeon of Bicêtre :—

'I declare that the alleged conspiracy was a falsehood, a calumny! How could these men have conspired? They were kept apart—they did not know each other—the greater part had never seen each other till they met for the first time on the carts that were to convey them to a Tribunal of blood, and thence to the scaffold. In all times and in every prison there have been and will be projects of escape; but it was reserved for our day to confound such projects with a conspiracy. But these bloodthirsty men wanted victims, and they tried their hand at Bicêtre, and that first step having been successful, they hesitated at nothing, and invented conspiracies at the Luxembourg—the Carmes—St. Lazare—La Force, &c. The two witnesses, on whose evidence the seventy-two prisoners of Bicêtre suffered, were follows already condemned to twenty years' irons for *perjury*. But after they had done this "public service," as it was called, the government ordered them to be released from their

* Probably by a slight resistance of *amour propre* to Robespierre's *réduction* of the decree against the Brissotins. See antè, p. 455.

irons—to have separate rooms—to be delicately fed—and, most monstrous absurdity and folly, there was inscribed in large letters over the doors of these two infamous wretches, "THE FRIENDS OF THEIR COUNTRY."'—*Procès Fouq.*, No. x.

Our readers will naturally ask what advantage any man or party could possibly derive from the murders of these poor jail-birds—none of whose names, except only Osselin's, had ever been heard of? Was it some secret pique of Robespierre's against Osselin? but even then how could it be necessary to make such a general massacre to get rid of so contemptible a fellow as Osselin? We cannot answer, and must leave it as one of the *Mystères de Paris* of that mysterious time.

Just at this moment, when the Committees of Government and Fouquier Tinville appeared to be at a loss for pretexts of accusation, two events almost simultaneous opened an opportunity of which they largely availed themselves, and produced the affair known by the name of the 'CHEMISES ROUGES'—which deserves particular notice, as well for the political purposes to which it was perverted as for the diversified interest of its circumstances and the gigantic guilt of its conclusion.

About one o'clock on the night between the 22nd and 23rd of May, 1794, a man of the name of Henry Lamiral, about fifty years of age, formerly messenger in the Lottery Office, who resided in the same house with Collot d'Herbois (No. 4, Rue Favart), waited for him on their common staircase, and fired two pistols at him without effect.

And on the next day, 24th of May, a young girl of the age of twenty, named Amy Cécile Renaud, who presented herself at Robespierre's lodging, and desired earnestly to see him, was arrested and charged with an intention to assassinate him. We refer for the details of these cases to our Essay on Robespierre. We are now considering them only in reference to the Tribunal, which might think itself happy in thus obtaining—for the first time, with the exception of Charlotte Corday—a legitimate victim. But that would have been too poor a harvest.

On the next day, the 25th of May, the Society of Jacobins voted an address to congratulate the Convention on the safety of the two faithful representatives of the people, and to invoke 'such a *terrible vengeance* on the guilty as should arrest these frightful attempts.' And who will our readers believe was the

spokesman of this deputation of the Jacobin Club, demanding a *terrible vengeance* on parties not yet tried? No other than *Dumas* himself, the president of the Tribunal, which was thereafter to try those whom its president had thus already condemned. This seems monstrous—it is nothing to what follows.

On the 26th of May Barrère ascends the Tribune of the Convention with a report in the same tone as one that he had made two days before against England, but much longer, more elaborate, and more malignant,—and even amongst Barrère's *Carmagnoles* this one is, we think, pre-eminent for his usual qualities of absurdity and atrocity. Through ten columns of the 'Moniteur' (29th of May, 1794), all the crimes of England—from the original sin of being a 'Carthaginian colony' down to Cécile Renaud's pocket-knife—are developed as the preface of a decree

'*forbidding the soldiers of the Republic to give quarter to the British or Hanoverians.*'

This decree was passed with loud and general acclamation, and directed to be translated into all languages and sent to all the armies with orders for its being carried into execution. It was in this report that, to encourage the French troops to butcher their prisoners, Barrère used the celebrated phrase, 'il n'y a que les morts qui ne reviennent pas.' (*Moniteur, ib.*) All our readers have heard of this celebrated decree, but many may not be aware of the circumstances in which it was passed. M. Thiers does not notice them; and indeed only alludes to the decree itself in a distant passage and on another subject. Mr. Alison, also, led astray by his faithless guides, mentions the decree *seventy-three* pages after his account of Cécile's affair, and then with a wrong date and not the slightest reference to, or apparent suspicion of, the circumstances with which it was connected. And this is history!

Revolutionary vengeance, generally so active, now, in spite of all these provocations, grew rather slow; and, though the Tribunal was very busy with ordinary cases and prison conspiracies, the trial of Lamiral and Renaud was delayed for above three weeks. The fact was, that the Committees and their agents were busy in selecting other victims to be hooked on to these cases.

There had been in the Constituant Assembly a Baron de Batz, who took a lead in financial questions, and was much connected

with financiers. This gentleman had been arrested in the preceding year, but contrived to escape; and his absence afforded the opportunity of setting him up as 'the agent of Pitt and the foreign powers,' and the mainspring of an imaginary conspiracy, to which the Committees gave the captivating name of the *Foreign Conspiracy*, or '*Conspiration de l'Etranger*;' and this was attached to Lamiral's case by no other link than that Lamiral was acquainted with, and used to meet at a billiard-table, one Roussel, who had been intimate with Batz: but how Cécile Renaud could be connected with these was never attempted to be shown.

At length on the 14th of June the Committees, by the organ of Elie Lacoste, produced a report which reiterated all Barrère's denunciations of Batz as the accomplice of Danton, Hébert, and Chaumet, and of him and of all as the '*agents of Pitt*;' and concluded with a decree, sending Lamiral, Cécile Renaud, and sixty-two other persons, '*all accomplices of Batz*,' before the Revolutionary Tribunal. We are tempted to give one specimen of the truth and logic of this official paper.

Citizen Lacoste states that Batz and his accomplices were supplied by Pitt, not only with assignats, but with 'heaps of guineas' (*guinées amoncelées*), with which

'ils achetaient de l'or à un prix énorme pour en diminuer la quantité en le faisant passer à nos ennemis ou en l'enfouissant.'—*Moniteur*, 15 June, 1794.

This charge against Mr. Pitt, of sending gold to buy gold and thus making gold scarce, seems somewhat wild, but it is common sense compared with the arguments by which Lacoste connects Batz with Lamiral—and Cécile and sixty-two others with *them*. Against the great majority of these poor people there is not even a charge—many of them had been in prison six months before Lamiral's affair; and in four cases, and four only, is there any attempt to connect them with it. And these four cases are:—

1. When the news of the attack on Collot d'Herbois reached the little town of Choisy-sur-Seine, one Saintanax, a medical student, who had been drinking and quarrelling in a coffee-house, had said that he was sorry that such a scoundrel had escaped, but that neither he nor Robespierre would escape long.

2. A poor schoolmaster of the name of Cardinal was denounced

as having spoken disrespectfully of Robespierre, particularly with reference to Robespierre's presumption in the part he had played in *the fête de l'Etre Suprême*—but this was eighteen days after the attempted assassination.

3. A woman of the name of Lamartinière was acquainted with Lamiral, and had bought his furniture when he changed his lodgings; she probably was more intimate with him than she was willing to allow, but nothing was stated to give any idea that she had any share in, or knowledge of his crime.

4. A lady of the name of Lemoine-Crecy had two servants—Portebœuf and his wife; the wife, coming home from the market the morning after Collot's attack, reported the news with this addition, that 'the *malheureux* who had made the attempt had been taken.' The word *malheureux* might be construed either as *blaming* or as *pitying* Lamiral; the latter was the sense assumed by Lacoste. Her husband, too, was charged, when he heard the news, with having said '*c'est bien malheureux*,' which was also construed in a bad sense—and their mistress, Madame Lemoine-Crecy, was asked whether Portebœuf did not tell her the news, and add '*c'est bien malheureux*.' She answered 'No;' that she had first seen it in the morning newspaper. Will it be believed that on this charge, and this ambiguous meaning of the word '*malheureux*,' Portebœuf was executed as an accomplice of Lamiral, whom he had never seen, nor, before that morning, heard of?—but, still more dreadful, Madame Lemoine herself was executed because it was alleged that her servant had used these words in her presence! These are the nearest approach to anything like a charge in the whole sixty-two cases.

The young Laval Montmorency—the Prince of Rohan-Rochefort, the Prince of St. Maurice—and the Marquises de Pons and de Marsan, were guilty of their—names.

The venerable Sombreuil, saved in the massacres of September by the heroism of his daughter, now died, accompanied by his son. The daughter again exerted her filial piety, and implored the mercy of the Convention and the Tribunal; but the Convention and Tribunal, more cruel than the *Massacreurs*, sent both father and son to death—and the indictment does not even affect to assign a reason.

In those days no great sympathy was felt for these pure and noble persons, but considerable public interest was felt for a lady

of celebrated beauty, though of somewhat equivocal character, called Madame de Sainte Amaranthe. Many stories are told as to the cause of her fate. One was, that at a dinner at her house, Robespierre, warmed with wine, had divulged some of his projects; and being apprised of this indiscretion next day by the actor Trial, one of the guests, he ensured the silence of the whole company by sending them to the scaffold. It would be easy to disprove this story, but it cost Trial his livelihood and his life; for, after the 9th Thermidor, the public hissed him off the stage, which, it seems, broke his heart. The interest, however, was not so much for Madame de Sainte Amaranthe, as for her young, and still more beautiful daughter, just married to the son of the celebrated minister Sartines. They all, with the young Louis de Sainte Amaranthe, aged only 17, perished on the same scaffold. The young woman exhibited at the bar so much loveliness, and such admirable spirit, that even Fouquier was startled; and showed—after his own fashion—if not his admiration, at least his wonder, by exclaiming that 'he had a mind to follow the cart, to see whether the —— would brazen it out to the last.' There has been even up to this day no rational conjecture as to the secret causes of the murder of this family. Of public crime or even judicial charge there is not a trace.

There are twenty others of these cases on which we should have something to say, but we must pass on to facts if possible more striking than those we have related. There were four superior officers (Administrateurs) of the police at Paris, named Marino, Froidure, Soulès, and Dangé. These men were energetic patriots —we need not add, execrable villains; but had, it seems, now fallen into disgrace with the Committees. After the sixty-four were ranged on the fatal benches, the Public Accuser called for the four Administrators, who came bowing and smiling, and requesting 'to know in what way their services were required.' O terrible surprise! Fouquier's answer was to order the gendarmes to lay hold of them, and place them with the criminals. He had received supplementary orders from the Committee to include these fellows in the pending condemnation, but on what grounds he did not condescend to state, and the wretches themselves had probably no distinct idea!

But there came still another victim, and well worthy was he to appear as an epilogue to this tragedy. Just as the trial was about to begin, Dumas, the president, being in his private room, a note was brought to him, apostrophising him as a 'man of blood—murderer—monster—that had put to death the family and friends of the writer—who desired to share the fate of those that were to die that day, as he shared their opinions and sentiments.' This note—evidently that of a man driven to madness by grief and despair—was signed '*Comte de Fleury.*' At the moment that Dumas had read the note, Fouquier came into the room. 'Here,' said Dumas, handing him the note, 'is a little *billet-doux.*' 'Ah!' replied Fouquier, 'the gentleman is in a hurry! but I will indulge him.' The *sixty-four* prisoners were already in court—'soon after,' said the witness, 'five others were added: the four Administrators, and a fifth, who, being asked his name, answered—the Count de Fleury!'

To this terrible charge, when brought against him at his trial, Fouquier could only reply that he remembered nothing of it, and that the witness must be mistaken; but the witness's account was corroborated by other evidence, and is confirmed by a slight but decisive circumstance—in the *Liste des Condamnés* the names of the original indictment are complete in numerical order, and then are added, in a kind of note and without the usual running number, the four Administrators—and the *Comte de Fleury.*

The trial had begun before this last incident; but where are the documents?—the witnesses? There are none! The sole and simple formality is, that Dumas requires each individual to answer directly 'Yes' or 'No' to 'Was he (or she) an accomplice in the design against Collot or Robespierre?' Lamiral answered boldly, '*Yes.*' Cécile said that she had not meant to hurt anybody. All the rest answered '*No*'—several endeavoured to speak, but the President silenced them. The young Prince de St. Maurice was heard to say, 'You brought me here on a charge of emigration—I have here proofs——.' Dumas cut him short, and sentenced the whole *sixty-nine** to death.

* Mr. Alison's imperfect account of this affair concludes with the following statement:—'*Her* [Cécile Renaud's] *whole relations, to the number of sixty, were involved in her fate, among whom were a number of young men bravely combating on the frontier in defence of their country.*' (Hist. v. ii. p. 321.) We say nothing of the style of this passage, but its statement of facts is absolutely un-

To flatter the vanity and vengeance of Robespierre and Collot, it occurred to Fouquier to consider this attack on those *fathers of the country* as a parricide; and he had *red shirts* prepared in which—to mark the enormity of their guilt—the whole were sent to the scaffold that same day; and Fouquier, who looked out to enjoy so extraordinary a procession, exclaimed jocosely that it looked like a *fournée* of cardinals!

Whether *seven* other persons, condemned on the same day in the other section of the court, were included in this melancholy masquerade we are not informed.

This is the case known by the name of the '*Chemises Rouges*;' and we think it will puzzle the most inordinate admirer of the Revolution to discover how these, and many thousand similar atrocities, could have contributed in any way, immediate or remote, to the regeneration of the French people.

Will our readers credit that we have got through but little more than half this catalogue of crimes, though we have arrived within six weeks of the 9th Thermidor? In these six weeks 1200 more victims are to die. The principal engine was that most absurd, but, as we have shown, most convenient of all pretexts—the Conspiracy of Prisons. About the 4th or 5th of July it was resolved to bring 159 prisoners from the Luxembourg to trial at once; and Fouquier actually had the court of the Salle de la Liberté altered and a scaffolding * raised, capable of containing 200 persons at once; and, as if this were likely not to suffice, preparation was made for adding more seats if necessary. Fouquier and the surviving members of the Committees threw upon each other the blame of this project, and claimed the *merit* (!) of having

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true. Instead of *sixty* relatives of Cécile, there were but *three*—her father, her aunt, and a young brother. None of the others were in any way connected either with her or her crime. As to the '*number of young men bravely combating on the frontier*,' there was *not one* to whom this description could apply. Cécile had indeed two other brothers who were brought up from the army to Paris, but they were not executed nor even tried.

* M. Thiers says that Fouquier had erected a *guillotine* in the great hall of the Palais, and that it was only by the reiterated orders of Committees that he was forced reluctantly to remove it; and we made the same statement in our essay on Robespierre. We suspect, however, that this was a mistake occasioned by an ambiguous use of the word *échafaud*, and we now incline to believe that the *échafaud*—*scaffold*—which Fouquier was said to have erected was what would be better expressed by '*échaffaudage*,' *scaffolding*; indeed, we find it called *échaffaudage* in a note to the *Procès*, No. 20. The *Guillotine* is nowhere mentioned; and the context everywhere seems to imply that the *scaffolding*, raised for the trial of 200 prisoners, was meant.—See *Procès Fouquier*, *Réponse des Membres des Comités*, p. 58; and *Moniteur*, 31st August, 1794.

divided the massacre into three batches. But what Fouquier could not deny—for the document was there—was, that one sentence of death against the *whole* number had been drawn up and *signed by the judges* the day before any of them were tried, and it was on this premature sentence that the first batch was executed! These three batches, with some tried in the other court, were sent to the scaffold—67 on the 7th July, 60 on the 9th, and 44 on the 10th of July; total in three days 171. And then followed the prisoners of the Carmes and La Force, and St. Lazare, thirty, forty, fifty a day.

By this time Fouquier and the Tribunal had lost all sense of shame, and seem to have become literally drunk with blood; and every frightful anecdote that we have related in our former pages would find a hundred echoes in the accumulated horrors of this last fortnight. Narrow as our space grows, we must find room for a few out of many hundred interesting cases.

Several instances appeared in which the judges had signed sentences *in blank*, which were never filled up, though the prisoners had been executed. In explaining one such case, Wolf, one of the clerks of the court, gave the following singular evidence:—

'This was caused by the extreme rapidity of the operations—no criminal could be executed without a certificate of the sentence from the officiating clerk, and the clerk, for his own safety, would not give the certificate till he had obtained the signature of the judges to the sentence; but the *time being too short* for copying these judgments out fair for signature the same day, and as it would have been *an act of inhumanity* to have kept the wretched prisoners in an agony of twenty-four hours, waiting for death—the clerks obtained the judges' signature to a *form*, which he could fill in next day at his leisure, and in the meanwhile was safe in giving the certificate for execution. The reason that the sentence now produced is still in blank is, that Legris, the officiating clerk on that occasion, and who was to have filled them up, *was himself arrested at five o'clock one morning, and guillotined at four o'clock the same afternoon.*'—*Proc. Foug.* No. xxii.

This, we think, exceeds anything we ever heard or read of. A tender-hearted clerk sends a crowd of prisoners to death twenty-four hours before their time, merely to spare their feelings, and is himself within the same day arrested, tried, and guillotined by the same sort of summary humanity!

Several women, when suddenly sentenced to death, endeavoured to delay the execution by a declaration of pregnancy. In the earlier days a decent respite was allowed to ascertain the fact, and some women were saved; others, and amongst them Osselin's mistress, were, *after a delay of five months*, executed: but latterly such questions were decided with the most indecent rapidity. In the very last week of the existence of the Tribunal an extraordinary number of ladies were condemned. 'I saw,' said Wolf, the clerk before quoted, 'at least ten or twelve women *executed the same day that they had declared themselves pregnant.* The cases were indeed referred to the examination of the medical men, but upon their cowardly refusal to speak decisively they were all guillotined.' Another clerk, Tavernier, tells the story in more detail. He was summoned to a meeting of judges to draw up the order for the execution of the unhappy women, who, as Fouquier and Coffinhall, one of the vice-presidents, told him, 'had been examined, and as the medical men would not say they were pregnant, and as they had been all shut up in the Maison Lazare *apart from men*, their plea must be rejected.' On this Tavernier had the courage to observe, 'first, that some of them—the Duchess de St. Aignan, for instance, who was four months gone—had been in the same prison with her husband; but, secondly, that they were all condemned for a *conspiracy with men*—that the indictment alleged that they had secret interviews with their male accomplices—and that therefore their plea could not possibly be rejected on the ground stated.' Upon which Coffinhall, the next in rank and ferocity to Dumas, who was dictating the warrant of execution, told him that 'he had no voice in the affair, and was to write what he was ordered.' The other judges were silent. Tavernier wrote the order according to Coffinhall's* dictation, and the unhappy ladies were all executed.

One victim seemed, on Fouquier's trial, to rise from the grave to confront her assassins. M. and Madame de Serilly had afforded an asylum to the Countess de Montmorin; this was a mortal crime, and they, with the Countess, had been brought before the Tribunal

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* We cannot now comprehend how the Princess Lubomirska, Madame de St. Aignan, and others visibly *far advanced* in pregnancy could have been executed—but so stands the evidence.

as accomplices of Madame Elizabeth, and all condemned, as we have seen. Madame de Serilly, on hearing the sentence, fainted away; but Madame de Montmorin, seeing her friend speechless at her feet, had the presence of mind to declare to the Tribunal that 'Madame de Serilly was pregnant.' M. de Serilly and Madame de Montmorin were led to death; and Madame de Serilly was removed to some hospital, where she was so utterly forgotten that it was supposed she had been executed with her husband, and her death was recorded in the official registers of Paris. On Fouquier's trial, however, she reappeared, and holding *her certificate of death* in her hand, gave the following evidence:—

'On the 10th of May, my husband and I, and twenty-three other persons, were condemned to death *on this spot.*

'We were charged, my husband and I, as accomplices of the 28th of February, 20th of June, and 10th of August. All our trial was to ask us our names, our ages, and our qualities. Dumas silenced us —not one was heard.

'My life was saved by a declaration of pregnancy, which the surgeons confirmed.

'I saw my husband *there—there*—where I now see his murderers.

'Here is the certificate of *my death*, which has been delivered to me by the proper authorities!'—*Proc. Fouq.*, No. xxxviii.

We know not that there is anything in the imaginary drama finer than the appearance of this widowed lady, still young, standing in that awful place, and exclaiming, with outstretched hand, '*J'ai vu* LÀ *mon mari—J'y vois aujourd'hui ses bourreaux.*' *

A similar case, but of more complicated enormity, was produced two days after, of which we have the authentic details, not only in Fouquier's trial, but in a report made to the Convention itself in 1795. There appeared at Fouquier's trial a young lady—her maiden name had been St. Pern—she was the widow of the Marquis de Cornuillière. She related that she, aged 21, her husband, 22, her brother, under 17, her mother, an uncle, a grand-uncle, aged 80, and her grandfather, aged 81—seven of one family, and three generations—were all brought before the Tribunal on the 9th of July, and condemned as having been

* An interesting letter of Madame de Serilly's, giving a detailed account of this trial (too long for insertion here), is printed in Nougaret's *Histoire des Prisons*, iv. 251; but by extraordinary ignorance he confounds Madame de *Serilly* with Madame de *Sillery-Genlis*. A stranger blunder we never met with.

accomplices of the *tenth of August*, though they could have shown that they were at that time residents of St. Malo, in Brittany: but the Tribunal would not hear them—nay, they would not *look* at them; for the boy under 17 was condemned as his own father—as the father of his sister four years older than he—as the husband of his own mother—as the grandfather of five or six nephews and nieces. It had happened, by some accident, that the *father*, M. St. Pern, was left in the prison, and the son, who was not even alluded to in the indictment, was brought in his stead. As *his* name had not been mentioned, it was concluded that he was safe; and the young mother, certain that she and her husband were about to die, recommended her infant children to the care of this brother; but, to their astonishment, the jury brought in a verdict of guilty against *him*, by his *father's name, age, and title*, and he perished accordingly with the rest of his family, except Madame de Cornuillière, who was seven months gone with child, and was saved. She further charged three of the persons then under trial with Fouquier—Renaudin, Chatelet, and Prieur—with having been jurors on her unhappy case. They strenuously denied the fact:

'Alas!' said the young widow, 'I have a sad record of these men's names. When my husband was leaving me to go to execution he cut off his hair for me, folding it up in the *list of the jury* which had been delivered to us on our coming to the Tribunal.'—*Proc. Fouq.*, No. xl.

And she produced the packet: the names were there, and a cry of pity and indignation burst from the whole court and auditory.

There is a terrible and complicated case revealed by the evidence of *Réal*—Buonaparte's celebrated *Count* Réal—who is mixed up in all these affairs as public prosecutor of the first Tribunal, and successively counsel, prisoner, and almost victim, of the second. He states that a youth under sixteen, of the name of *Mellet*, a prisoner with him in the *Luxembourg*, and who was a general favourite for his graceful appearance and lively and obliging manners, had one evening, by mistake, answered the call of the jailers for one Maillé.* The boy took an affectionate leave of Réal,

* Either by an error of the press or of his own ear, this name is given in Réal's evidence as *Bellay*: it seems certain that it should be *Maillé*.

hoping that he was about to rejoin his father and mother, who were in another prison, but was taken to the Tribunal on the 21st of July, where, of course, there was no charge against him, as he was not the person intended: no matter! he was sent to the guillotine to complete the number, and the unhappy mother only learned from Réal's lips, after the 9th Thermidor, the fate of her boy. The sequel of this story is still more shocking. There was a lady, widow of the *Vicomte de Maillé*, her maiden name *Leroux*, confined in St. Lazare, whither her son, another boy of sixteen, had *voluntarily* accompanied her; and he was no doubt the person for whom the jailers were inquiring at the Luxembourg on the 21st of July, and for whom the other boy, *Mellet*, suffered on the next day. But this poor Maillé did not escape; for on the 23rd of July he was removed from St. Lazare to the Conciergerie, and thence next morning to the Tribunal and the scaffold—his crime being that *he had thrown a rotten herring at the turnkey who had brought it to him.* (*Procès*, No. 39.) On his condemnation he stated that he was not sixteen years old (an age protected by the law). The president brutally answered '*May be so, but you are fourscore for crime.*' (*Ib.*) His mother, who appeared on Fouquier's trial, stated these circumstances, which excited the liveliest horror and astonishment in the audience, and also revealed another, if possible, more hideous scene of the same protracted tragedy, that on the 25th of July it was intended that *she herself* should have been brought before the Tribunal, but there was found another lady with the almost synonymous name of *Maillet* (née *Simon*), and she was brought forward and tried as the *Vicomtesse de Maillé* (née *Leroux*). This mistake was immediately discovered by Madame *Simon Maillet's* not being able to understand the questions of name and age intended for Madame *Leroux Maillé;* and the officer of the court told the former, with cool and cruel audacity, '*You were not the person intended, but 'tis as well to-day as to-morrow,*' and she was executed. But Madame Leroux Maillé was still to be disposed of; and in the night between the 26th and 27th of July this latter lady was removed from St. Lazare to the Conciergerie, and next day (the 9th Thermidor) brought before the Tribunal. When she saw those who had murdered her son three days before she fell into convulsions, and the people interfered to prevent her being tried in that state. Robespierre was over-

which pretended to legality—was announced in more naked atrocity, and even put into the form of a substantive motion by his brother, Augustine, who, after complaining of the undue and scandalous scruples which the Convention seemed to entertain about doing justice on the most guilty—*du plus scélérat*—of men, proposed to decree at once—

'The National Convention, considering that Louis, late King of the French, has been condemned (*jugé*) by the Nation, that the representatives of the People would betray their own duty and invade the rights of the People if they were to attempt to question its sovereignty, decrees

'*That Louis Capet shall be brought to the bar to declare his original accomplices; to hear sentence of death pronounced upon him, and to be forthwith conducted to execution.*' *

A considerable tumult occurred at this stage of the debate, but it does not appear whether this extravagant proposition was actually put, or whether, as is most likely, it was smothered in the general confusion. We think it worth notice, as containing the essence of the elder Robespierre's argument and the true exposition of the motives of the whole Jacobin party, who had avowed their intention of executing the King long before he was tried, and who had all along boldly employed the words *trial* and *condemnation* as synonymous and identical.

That crime was hardly consummated when the murderers resumed their internecinal hostilities. Indeed, on the very night of the King's condemnation the Girondins made an attempt to turn it to profit against the Jacobins. 'We have but half done our duty,' cried Gensonné, one of the most sober of his party, 'in punishing the tyrant, if we do not punish the authors of the massacres.' Gensonné may perhaps have made this proposition in the hopes of saving Louis; but such an expedient—a comparison between the King and the *massacreurs*—so false—so odious—revolted common sense and common honesty; and the attempt, however intended, failed miserably, as attempted compromises between fear and falsehood on one side, and consistency and audacity on the other, never fail to do. The King expiated his

* Neither the speech nor motion are in the *Moniteur*, but they were printed separately by order of the Convention. The date is not given, but it must have been on the 10th December, when the *Moniteur* states that several members, and Robespierre junior amongst them, opposed the allowing counsel to the King.

Luxembourg prison an old general officer of the name of Tardieu-Malesey, with his wife and two daughters—one the wife of M. du Bois-Berenger, the other unmarried. Of the beauty, talents, spirit, and amiability of 'la jeune Bois-Berenger' we read the most rapturous accounts, and the fate of the whole family created a general interest. Into this case one of these Popular Commissions inquired, and, on the 26th of June, found them all to be

'extremely fanatical—having daily communications with priests, and keeping up a continued intercourse with them—which might bring about a counter-revolution' (*Courtois' Rep., App.* xxxix.)—

and sentenced them, in consequence, to *deportation*. This would have been, at any other time, a hard sentence for the revolutionary crime of daily prayer, but it was now a deliverance. This decision of the Commission, though dated on the 26th of June, was not ratified by the Committees of Government until the 21st of July, but it was then ratified, stamped, and ordered to be carried into effect. Alas! M. and Madame de Malesey and their two daughters had been, a fortnight before (9th of July) *executed* in one of the batches of the Luxembourg prisoners![M]

In one of the last of the prison batches occurred the celebrated case of M. de Loizerolles, executed under a warrant prepared for his son. Amidst such and so many horrors, we are not surprised that good feeling, to say nothing of national vanity, should seize on an incident that might diversify with any amiable traits the mean and monotonous butchery of these scenes. Everybody has read, therefore, with sympathy the accounts of M. Loizerolles being awakened in *the middle of the night* by the jailer's calling for his son, and having the heroic presence of mind to answer to the call without disturbing the sleeping youth. This touching scene is represented in one of the '*Tableaux Historiques de la Révolution*,' and has been repeated in memoirs and histories till it seems paradoxical to question any of the circumstances. And yet truth requires us to say that the circumstances have been essentially misstated, or, as the narrators and artists no doubt thought, improved. For our own parts we are satisfied that the real value of all such anecdotes lies in their *strict truth*. The facts—never, we believe, before collected, and only to be found scattered through Fouquier's trial—are these: The original *warrant* was neither for Loizerolles the *father* nor for Loizerolles the *son*, but for Loizerolles,

a daughter! (*Procès*, No. xix.) There was no such person; and how this first mistake occurred is not explained. No doubt it was a clerical error for *fils*, which was afterwards substituted for it in the *indictment:* but the warrant was for Loizerolles *fille*. With this warrant against Loizerolles *fille* the officers proceeded to the maison d'arrêt de St. Lazare, and, about four o'clock on the evening of the 25th of July, and therefore in *full daylight*, carried off 'Loizerolles *père*.' Thus vanishes the interesting *night-scene* of the '*Tableaux Historiques*;' and what really passed was this, for which we have the evidence of young Loizerolles *fils* himself:

'On the 7th Thermidor (25 July), about four o'clock in the evening, I heard the name Loizerolles called in the corridors. I, not doubting that this *call of death* was meant for me, ran to my father's room to take my last leave of him: but what did I see?—a turnkey about to carry off my father! I hastened to apprise my mother that my father was about to be taken from us for ever—she came instantly and embraced him with a cry of despair—my father was carried off. I followed him to where my mother could not see our last pangs at parting. When we were at the last wicket, he said to me, "My boy, console your mother—live for her—they may murder, but they cannot degrade me." My tears, my grief, prevented any answer; but I was about to embrace him for the last time, when the turnkey brutally thrust me back, and shut the door insolently in my face, with these cruel words, "You cry like a child, but your own turn will come to-morrow."

'When my father reached the Conciergerie, they furnished him with a copy of his *indictment;* but what was his surprise, in looking at it, to find it was meant for me, and not for him! It was *then* that he formed the generous resolution of sacrificing himself for me; and communicated his design to Boucher, a friend and fellow-sufferer. Boucher admired his heroism, but dissuaded him, saying, "You will destroy yourself, and not save him."

'On the 8th Thermidor (26th July) my father and thirty fellow-sufferers appeared before the court. The indictment is read—*Loizerolles the younger* is arraigned; but, instead of a youth, it is a venerable old man with long white hairs who answers the call. What can be said for the judge or the jury who could thus condemn an old man of sixty-two for a youth of twenty-two? That same afternoon my father died—died for his son—and his son did not know it for three months! My mother and I were still detained. At last, on the 6th Brumaire (26th October) we were restored to liberty—liberty dearly bought—but how welcome if my father had lived to share it! It was a few days after my release that M. Prauville, a fellow-prisoner

of my father, who had escaped death by the 9th Thermidor, informed me of the particulars which I have related. I met M. Prauville casually in the street; he recognised me—congratulated me on having also escaped the storm, and then told me what I have repeated. I hardly knew how to believe it; but I next day acquired a full certainty of its truth; for, passing over the bridge of the Hôtel Dieu, and looking at the posting-bills with which it was covered, I saw the *affiche* of my own death. With the permission of the patrol, I tore it off and carried it to Berlier, a member of the Convention, by whom a strict inquiry was made into the whole case; and my mother and I had our property restored to us.'—*Procès Fouquier*, No. xliii.

But the truth is, that although the elder Loizerolles was, like all the rest, murdered, it was not by mistake for either son or daughter. *He* was all along the intended victim, having been denounced by a 'personal enemy,' one Gagnant, the administrator of the prison (*Tabl. Hist. de St. Lazare*, 1.) It does not appear whether the clerical error which substitutes the name of the son existed in the original warrant for the transfer from St. Lazare to the Conciergerie—probably not; but it certainly got into the indictment. The younger Loizerolles, however, is certainly mistaken in saying that at the trial the Tribunal condemned the father for the son, for it was proved (*Procès*, xxi.) that the judge, Coffinhall, corrected with his own pen the name, age, and description, from '*François*,' '*fils*,' '22 *ans*,' to '*Jean*,' '*père*,' '61 *ans*;' so that there is better evidence than appears in most cases that they knew whom they were executing, and 'the victory of Gagnant over his enemy Loizerolles *père*' was announced as a triumph by the prison authorities. (*Ib.*) We can well believe that M. de Loizerolles *would* have died to save his son, had the fatal alternative really arisen; but, in fact, all that his paternal devotion could do consisted in this, that when, in the evening of the 6th, at *the Conciergerie* (the son having remained at *St. Lazare*), the father received notice of trial for the morrow in his son's name, he had the presence and strength of mind to repress all notice of the mistake, well aware, no doubt, that he was himself the intended victim, but that, if he had raised any question of identity, the son would have been sent for, and both would have perished. It adds to the painful interest which, even when reduced to its real circumstances, this case excites, to think that it occurred the very day before the fall of Robespierre.

The evidence of the younger Loizerolles acquaints us with two facts important to the general subject—one that the list of the victims used to be *placarded*, to gratify, we suppose, the popular greediness for blood; and the other, still more monstrous, that the sentences were so printed and placarded before they were pronounced—even before the trials had commenced; for the younger Loizerolles found his own name on the placard, though the mistake had certainly been corrected, if not before the trial began, at least before the sentence was pronounced.

But another and still more shocking affair happened next day; and we shall conclude our notice of individual cases with this, the very last of the whole series, which actually took place after Robespierre's fall: it is almost worthy of being the finishing stroke of this protracted massacre. A gentleman of the name of Puy-Deverine, aged sixty-nine, and his wife, aged fifty-five, were sentenced (we cannot make out on what charge) with forty other persons, and executed in the evening of the 9th Thermidor by the special order of Fouquier; though the executioner himself, having heard of the fall of Robespierre, had suggested the delay of the execution. It was proved on Fouquier's trial that M. Puy-Deverine had been for upwards of three years *deaf and dumb*, and in such a woeful paralysis of all his vital functions as to be in a state worse than death. His excellent wife had devoted herself to the care of this breathing corpse. The pair had been examined by one of the *Popular Commissions* before mentioned; they were acquitted of all crime, and promised their immediate liberation. And they were liberated—they were guillotined! It was a mercy to both; but as it was the last, so it was perhaps the most abominable, the most wanton, cruel, and impious sacrifice of all that the Tribunal had made! The substantial wickedness of this murder throws into the shade the minor crime, that this unhappy couple were actually arraigned, condemned, and executed under the husband's *baptismal* name of *Durand*—so little did Fouquier or the Tribunal know or care who it was that completed their predestined number of victims.

The day that followed this last exhibition of the tyranny of Robespierre saw Robespierre himself and twenty-one of his associates brought to the same scaffold; and on the next day seventy, and a few days after thirteen others. Amongst these there were, of the Tribunal, the president, Dumas; the senior judge, Coffin-

hall; Fleuriot-l'Escot, formerly Fouquier's deputy; and five or six of the jurors. But Fouquier and all the other members took their usual places at the Tribunal as if nothing had happened, and sent to the scaffold without trial, but on a decree of outlawry,* these their patrons and colleagues with the same callous zeal that they had shown against their former victims—nay, they presented themselves on the morning of the 10th Thermidor to congratulate the Convention on its victory over the tyrants; and Fouquier in person solicited a decree to facilitate and accelerate the sending his outlawed friends to the scaffold.

The first movement of the Convention on the day of Robespierre's execution was to dissolve the Tribunal, and a decree to that effect passed; but in an hour or two Billaud Varennes hurried down to the sitting, and complained of this unpatriotic decree, and we may almost say commanded the Convention to repeal it. The Convention obeyed; and so little was either the principle or practice of the Tribunal discredited either in that assembly or public opinion, that the Tribunal itself was on the 9th August, 1794, replenished and re-established in all its monstrous power (except only that the law of the 22nd Prairial was repealed), and five of the former judges—all the officers and several of the jurors—were re-appointed to it. Even Fouquier himself was at first maintained in his office; though he was in a day or two after dismissed, and with some of the most notorious of the surviving judges and jury arrested and ordered to be tried by the renovated Tribunal.

The proceedings of this new court—the *Third* Revolutionary Tribunal—seem to have been almost as irregular and arbitrary as those of the old. The victims were for the greater part of the lower classes, and the imputed crime was in general no other than that he or she had made use of some anti-revolutionary expression —*propos contre-révolutionnaires*. A young hairdresser is executed because he was reputed to be a dangerous lunatic and a zealous partisan of tyranny. A poor friar, who had apostatised from his *order* by taking the civic oath and enlisting in a battalion of Mar-

* We cannot resist the temptation of an instance of the abuse of words, or what we should call an Irish bull, in Barère's great report to the Convention of the transactions of the 9th Thermidor:—'The villain [*scélérat*, Lerebours, a Robespierrian] has made his escape for the moment. He was wanting yesterday at the general execution of the conspirators; but it *is now for the law to reach him*, and I propose that he be *put out of the law* [*mis hors la loi*.]'—*Moniteur*, 14th Thermidor. We admit that the difference between *law* and *no law* was not great at that time, but the verbal contrast is almost ludicrous.

seillais, but not from his *religion*, was executed for fanaticism and federalism. The fanaticism was proved by his own confession that he still adhered to his religious belief, and by the fact of his having dated a letter from the *Incarnation of our Saviour* instead of the *year of the Republic*; and as to the federalism, we know that it was a crime that never existed, and that the name was invented as a password by which the Girondins were to be sent to the scaffold: but even if we could admit this federalism, what could this poor friar have had to do with them, who had been immolated and extirpated above a year before?

A notary-public of Dun was executed for having in his possession a copy of the '*Oraison Funèbre de Louis XVI. prononcée par l'infame Condé.*' Another notary was tried and executed for some royalist demonstrations he was said to have made in the department de la Meuse in September, 1792. They could not have been very remarkable, or they would not have escaped notice in the two terrible years that had elapsed. But whatever the notary may have said or done, we are at a loss to conceive on what pretence a female farm-servant of his—'*domestique vigneronne*'—was sent to the same scaffold: as were a commissary's clerk, Jean Paumier, for having embezzled portions of hay and oats of which he was in charge; and one Davesne, a distinguished patriot of the 10th of August, but now put to death for having made a profit of some halfpence in a contract of 50,000 pike handles, for which, under pretence of the urgency with which they were required, he charged three sous (halfpence) each more than they were worth.

Amongst the 44 obscure persons executed by this third Tribunal in the three months that followed the fall of Robespierre, we have no doubt that the vast majority of the cases were as bad as those of the former tribunal, and that there are many amongst them which if known would excite a special sympathy. One such we have accidentally found, and think worth preserving. Our readers may recollect that on the 20th June, when the mob had surrounded and were pressing upon the Queen and the Dauphin, one of them took pity on the mother and child, who were fainting under the crowd, pressure, and heat, and took the boy into his arms. The name of this goodnatured intruder never was known; but strange and lamentable it is to find in the scanty records of this third Tribunal, that John Joseph Bousquet, a butcher by trade, and a ci-devant

Juryman of the Revolutionary Tribunal, was condemned and executed as a Royalist for having on the 20th of June taken the little Capet into his arms and afterwards boasted that he had been allowed to kiss the Queen's hand in reward for his having done so. It was further alleged that, converted by this mark of favour, he had shown an interest in the Royal family, and had followed the King to the Assembly on the 10th of August with marks of sympathy and respect. Poor Bousquet admitted the facts, but reminded the Court that they had occurred while the monarchy still existed, and that, far from committing a crime, he had only done his duty. All in vain, and he expiated on the scaffold the real crime of having been on that day one of Santerre's satellites, and the more obnoxious one of being less brutal than his associates.

It seems incredible, yet all the proceedings of this third Tribunal prove beyond doubt that, although the terrible abuses of its predecessor had been the most prominent cause of the overthrow of the Robespierrian party, their successors should have pursued the same course, if not to the same numerical extent, yet with the same atrocious spirit of injustice and cruelty. Terror was still the order of the day, and the Tribunal vacillated between the terror it excited and the terror that it felt.

From the 27th of October till the 16th of December it was employed in the trial of Carrier and his associates for the unparalleled massacres of Nantes, and he and two associates were condemned and executed on the latter day: but twenty-six of his accomplices, though found guilty of the *facts* of murder, pillage, &c., were acquitted, as not having perpetrated them with *counter-revolutionary intentions;* and as it was a *revolutionary* tribunal, it inferred that it was not authorised to punish any but *counter-revolutionary* offences. This view of the duties of the Tribunal, which would have equally required the acquittal of Carrier himself, excited general surprise, and produced consequences which, to our ideas of law, seem even more extraordinary. On the 18th December Lecointre of Versailles denounced this iniquitous verdict to the Convention, which, upon his motion, with very little objection, ordered the acquitted persons to be re-arrested, and directed the Committee of Legislation to propose measures for having them tried again—which was done at Angers, some months later. This completed the discredit of the Tribunal. It was evident that it was not to be trusted with the trial of Fouquier,

and it was, as its two predecessors had been, ignominiously dissolved, and another, the *fourth*, Revolutionary Tribunal created (28th of December) with an entirely new and less arbitrary organization, by which, as might be expected, and as no doubt the Convention intended, it lost all its *revolutionary* value; and after trying Fouquier and his associates from the 29th of March to the 6th of May, it was finally abolished on the 2nd of June, 1795. The reports of these two trials of Carrier and Fouquier are, as we believe, the most extraordinary records of human depravity that the world has ever seen. We know of nothing that at all approaches to them in the variety and extent of corruption and atrocity which they reveal.

Fouquier and fifteen accomplices—judges, jurors, and witnesses—were executed on the 7th of May, 1795; and it was observed that they were followed to the scaffold by a class of persons more respectable than had ever been seen on such occasions, reproaching the culprits with the murder of a wife, a husband, a parent, or a child.

We will add but a few lines to complete our account of ANTONY-QUENTIN FOUQUIER TINVILLE. He began life as an attorney, but soon closed his professional career by a fraudulent bankruptcy; his next appearance was as one of the mob-heroes of the Bastille, and he became successively, a commissary of police—foreman of the jury in the first Revolutionary Tribunal—public accuser before the second—was indicted under the third—and tried and executed, at the age of 38, under the fourth, '*for having, under colour of legal judgments, put to death an innumerable crowd of French citizens of every sex and every age.*' (*Procès*, No. lx.) His countenance was hideous—a perfect type of his character; and that character seems so entirely beyond the pale of ordinary humanity, that one reads with a kind of surprise, as if it was unnatural, that he left a widow and several young children.

The defence of Fouquier and his fellow-culprits was, that they were only instruments of the Government in the execution of laws duly enacted; but this apology, even if we could admit the principle, cannot be allowed in their case—for it would not excuse the gross violation of all the forms of their own laws and the utter confusion and disregard of times, places, offences, and persons, shown in all their proceedings; nor was it true as a mere matter of fact, for it was proved that, in hundreds of instances, they outran

the cruelty of their ferocious government and the rigour of their iniquitous decrees. There are in Fouquier's own written defence some passages which are very remarkable, not only as to the character of the man, but historically as to the temper of the times even after the fall of Robespierre. At the interval of several months after that event, which is usually represented as closing in general indignation and reprobation the Reign of Terror, Fouquier still thinks that he will conciliate the favour of his judges and of the public at large, by pleading as his first merit, that 'during seventeen months that he fulfilled the rigorous duties of public accuser he procured (*provoqua*) the condemnation of *above two thousand* counter-revolutionists, and none of the solicitations to which I was subjected were capable of stopping me.' And further on, when noticing a charge of having prosecuted patriots, he expresses his astonishment that he should be called upon to answer such a charge, he who never brought to trial any but the most malignant and desperate (*forcené*) conspirators!—*he*, moreover, who had brought to judgment the Marie Antoinettes, the Elizabeths, the Orleanses, the Blanchlandes—the traitor generals the Federalists—the conspirators of Brittany—the Parliamentarians —the Farmers General—the Bankers—all enemies of liberty and equality!' (*Mémoire pour A. Q. Fouquier*, p. 5.) This looks like insanity, for these, as our readers know, are the very cases which common sense, justice, and humanity have, without one dissentient voice, placed amongst the most extravagant atrocities of the Revolutionary Tribunal.

Let it not be forgotten, that while all this was going on in Paris there were Revolutionary Tribunals at work in most of the great cities of France—in Lyons, Bordeaux, Nismes, Arras, and several others—which, though not so regular and continuous in their operations as the Parisian Tribunal, equalled them in the atrocity, and frequently exceeded them in the extent, of their massacres. We have not room, nor, indeed, adequate material, for the review of those innumerable and stupendous crimes, but a general recollection that death was at least as busy all over France as at Nantes and in Paris, is necessary to a due appreciation of the transactions we have been describing.

But for what ultimate object could this complicated system of murder have been pursued? We have seen that its origin was

obscure and its advance gradual, but none of the actors in it seem ever to have thought of whither it was going or how it was to end.

We, strangers to the country, and not quite contemporary with the events, though we have a youthful recollection of the astonishment they created—wanting the opportunities of information, and unversed in the traditional details of domestic history and manners, which none but a native can ever perfectly possess—we cannot pretend to have always traced with accuracy, or developed with clearness, these ancient '*Mystères de Paris*,' more horrible than the morbid imagination of the modern romancer can invent, and which are probably the secret source from which that morbid imagination has been unconsciously supplied. We have confessed that we are not able to form any clear idea of the motives of these enormous massacres; and the more closely we look at the details, the more embarrassed we are to find any solution of our difficulty. The deaths of the Queen, and even of Madame Elizabeth, of Charlotte Corday, of the Brissotins, the Hébertists, the Dantonists, and a few scattered individuals such as Egalité, Bailly, Barnave, Manuel, Miaczinski, and Custine, we can account for—not, indeed, on any rational principle, but as an exercise of party vengeance and political fanaticism; but we can trace no motive of this kind (at least to any extent) later than the death of the Dantonists on the 5th of April, 1794; and when we add, that of the whole number of victims of this Tribunal—2730—Danton was only the 561st; our readers will see that in the short space between the 7th of April and the 27th of July (9th Thermidor), there were crowded 2169 executions, for the great majority of which we are not only unable to give any reason, but we have never seen or heard of any attempt to assign one. We do not say that we cannot here and there trace individual motives and personal enmities, but they were only accessories which took the favourable opportunity of indulging themselves: they certainly were not the original cause.

That which comes nearest to a kind of general motive was Barrère's principle to '*battre monnaie*;' but even this fails as a *primum mobile*, for by an examination of the lists it appears that, of the whole number of 2730, the *rich* may be taken at rather less than 650, and the middle and lower classes somewhat above

1000 each. We can account for batches of the rich—such as the 31 farmers-general, and 25 parliamentarians—but what are they among so many? And it must be admitted that nowhere was the doctrine of equality more scrupulously exemplified than in the Lists of the Revolutionary Tribunals, where we find princes and porters—duchesses and kitchen-maids—counts and carters—magistrates, priests, soldiers, shopkeepers, artizans, day-labourers, and even felons, all confounded—but still with a due proportion of rich and poor—in one common slaughter. What could have been its motive? . It was not that the Government had any existing charge against, or real apprehensions of, these alleged counter-revolutionists, nor could it have any personal object in getting rid of them; with the exception of about a hundred political adversaries, there was not one of the victims of whom the Government could have been in any way afraid or even jealous. On the contrary, the Committees seem to have been very much puzzled to discover pretexts for bringing them before the Tribunal; and they had so little choice as to *who* should be brought, *provided* sufficiently large batches were found, that it is proved they latterly committed so largely to the meanest of their agents—jailers, turnkeys, and convicts—the power of life and death in making up the list of victims, that MAKERS of *lists* became a recognized class in the prisons, and grew to be persons of importance, to whom, base as they were, the other prisoners were constrained to pay a certain kind of court (*Réal Procès*, No. xiv.); and bribes as large as 400 louis and as small as a bottle of brandy were given for the precarious protection of these wretches. (*Tableau Historique de Lazare*, p. 53.) In short, the only object we can discover seems to have been a maniacal propulsion to keep the guillotine going—to produce the daily profusion of victims. On one occasion Fouquier, in his nightly visit to the Committee de Sureté Générale, stated that he had a list of thirty-five for the next day, and hoped to have sixty for the day after: the announcement was received by an exclamation of '*Bravo!*' (*Procès*, No. xii.) from the whole committee, as if there were some difficulty in completing the numbers.

And all this becomes still more surprising when we look at the official return, given in the *Moniteur*, of the total number of prisoners in Paris during the greater portion of this period:—

	Prisoners.
1st December, 1793	4133
4th January, 1794	4697
23rd February, ,, ...	5829
14th April, ,, ...	7241
20th May, ,, ...	7080
1st June, ,, ...	7084
8th July, ,, ...	7502
27th July, ,, ...	7913

And we have the evidence of the chief clerk in the police-office (*Procès*, xv.) and of Lecointre in his charge against the members of the Committees, that these numbers were latterly short of the reality by at least 1000. It is obvious that, compared with such a number of prisoners as 8900, the daily drafts of the Tribunal, enormous as they seem in themselves, were of little importance: 882 victims perished between the 1st of June and the 8th of July, and yet the number of prisoners increased by 418; and 606 perished between the 8th and 27th of July, with, still, an increase of 411.

By what hypothesis can we account for so great and so constant an influx of prisoners, that even these prodigious executions could not diminish the total number? Personal animosity must have been long since satiated, yet the cruelty was more vehement than ever:—

'Du sang—il faut du sang!—quoiqu'on n'ait plus de haine.'

Why, if the Committees were no longer actuated by enmity against individuals, did they murder so many; why, if they wanted to get rid of these prisoners, did they murder so few? How did the leaders suppose that it was to end? Where were they to find the solution of a difficulty growing every hour more inextricable?—or were they all mad? No! not mad in the ordinary sense of the word, for they undoubtedly were acting on some system of what they thought policy. It is impossible to disconnect the facts of the increased number of executions and the growth of Robespierre's influence; nor, on the other hand, can it be denied that he had absented himself personally from the Committees for six weeks before his fall, and that in these six weeks the executions had doubled, tripled, quadrupled. We have heretofore noticed the opinion that Robespierre was inclined to arrest

this march of death, but we always doubted it. A reperusal of his original speeches in the Jacobin Club and in the Convention confirms our earlier impression, that, during the time that he, from some personal pique, absented himself from the Committees, he was still urging and stimulating the sanguinary zeal of his colleagues; and that, if indeed he contemplated a return to mercy and justice, his scheme must have been to produce a revulsion by satiety and surfeit of blood.

But there is a fact closely connected with this part of our subject, which we have never yet seen noticed in reference to it, and which we think important and remarkable. While Fouquier and the Committees, and their agents and list-makers, were so hard run to find food for the Tribunals as to guillotine peasants for 'pricking themselves with pins,' and sempstresses for 'scolding,' there were somewhere in the prisons of Paris *seventy-three members of the Convention*, the important and influential remains of the great Girondin party, any connexion with which was the most fatal charge that Fouquier could introduce into one of his acts of accusation. How then did it happen that none of these ready-made victims were ever brought to the sacrifice? How and why were they—and they only, of any *class* of prisoners, so mercifully forgotten, or rather so carefully spared?—and why, after the 9th Thermidor, was not their innocence immediately and with acclamation proclaimed, and themselves recalled to their duties in the Senate? Why were they—and they, again we say, alone of any class of prisoners—kept for months in the same illegal durance in which they had lain for above a year? We can offer but one solution—that Robespierre was reserving them to liberate and bring forward—when his plan should be ripe—to turn the scale against his opponents, and confirm his majority in the Convention and his popularity in the country;—and that after his fall his successors were afraid of the return of these their old antagonists.

In fine the result seems to be—as Fouquier in his defence indicated—that 'the people wanted blood, and would have blood;' that the appetite grew with the indulgence; that although the *bourgeoisie* had become sick of the butchery, it was still, with the classes that had long given the law to Paris and now constituted the strength of the revolutionary government, the daily bread, the indispensable aliment of their political existence; and that both Robespierre and his adversaries were equally afraid that if they

paused for a moment in the career of blood, the good sense and courage of the country would have time to recover their influence, and would rise in indignant vengeance on the whole system of tyranny and terror.

Here we conclude a paper too long for our limits—yet infinitely too short for our subject—of which, involved as it is in the confusion and obscurity of that long night of terror, we are well aware that we have given but a slight and imperfect sketch. Our object will have been attained if we shall induce those who wish to study the French Revolution, to trace its history to its original sources; and if we can awaken the attention of the general reader to the great truth with which the whole Revolution is pregnant—that the direct intervention of what is called the *people*—which in Revolutionary language means nothing but the demagogues and the *populace*—in the actual government of a country, can produce nothing but a miserable anarchy, of which blood and plunder are the first fruits, and despotism the ultimate and not unwelcome result and remedy.

ESSAY VIII.

[QUARTERLY REVIEW, DECEMBER, 1843.]

THE GUILLOTINE.

1. *Notice Historique et Physiologique sur le Supplice de la Guillotine.* Par G. D. F. [*i.e.* Guyot de Fère.] pp. 16. Paris. 1830.
2. *Recherches Historiques et Physiologiques sur la Guillotine; et détails sur Sanson, ouvrage rédigé sur pièces officielles.* Par M. Louis du Bois, Ancien Bibliothécaire de l'Ecole centrale de l'Orne. pp. 35. Paris. 1843.

THE whole French Revolution, from the taking of the Bastille to the overthrow of the *Empire*, was in fact one long Reign of Terror. The summary vengeance of the *lanterne* in the earlier years—the systematised murders of the *guillotine* under the Convention—the arbitrary exile to pestilential climates under the Directory—and the tortures of the dungeon and the military executions under Buonaparte—all tended, in their way and for their time, to the creation and maintenance of that grand imposture—of which, although the events and their consequences were but too real, all the motives and pretences were the falsest and most delusive that ever audacity forged, credulity believed, or cowardice obeyed. Nor have the effects of this protracted system of terror yet passed away; it poisoned in its passage the very sources of history, and has left posterity, in many respects, under the same delusions that it imposed on its contemporaries.

The subserviency of the press to the dominant tyranny of the day was so general and so complete as to be now nearly incredible; those who look to the files of newspapers for information will find nothing but what, under the overwhelming terror of the moment,

the ruling faction might choose to dictate to the trembling journalists:* and it is additionally important to observe, that, as it is the nature and instinct of *fear* to disguise and conceal itself, so, during the whole of this diversified yet unbroken reign of terror, there is nothing which all parties, both the terrorists and terrified, were so anxious to hide as the omnipotent influence under which they all acted. When we, in a former essay, noticed this memorable fact (and we have good reason to say that it cannot be too often repeated), we gave a striking example of that palsy of the press. It is the fashion to call the *Moniteur* the best history of the Revolution, and its pages are universally appealed to as indisputable authority—and justly, as far as it goes; but the Moniteur itself is a very imperfect chronicle, and, even before it became the official paper, never ventured to say a syllable not actually dictated, or at least sanctioned, by the predominant factions. For instance, on the 22nd of January, 1793, the day after the king's murder—a somewhat remarkable event, not unworthy, we should have supposed, a paragraph in a newspaper—the Moniteur does not so much as allude to it; and ekes out its meagre column of Parisian intelligence by a poor critique on '*Amboise—opéra comique!*' And again: the assassination of Marat, which took place on the 13th July, 1793, is not mentioned till the 15th, and then only incidentally, in the report of the debates of the Convention; and the trial of Charlotte Corday, which took place on the 17th, was not reported in any of the journals till the 23rd, nor in the Moniteur till the 29th, and then only half was given; it was not concluded till the 30th, though the execution had taken place on the evening of the trial, almost a fortnight before. We could produce hundreds of similar instances; and, in fact, the Moniteur is, during the days of the National Assemblies and the Convention, of very little value, except as a convenient summary of the debates, and even as to them it is not always trustworthy,†—witness the following passage of a letter addressed by the editor

* The press had a certain degree of freedom during the earlier days of the Directory, but on the 18th *Fructidor* (4th Sept. 1797) forty-two journals were violently suppressed, their proprietors and editors were all *transported*, and their properties confiscated. From that time till the Restoration there was no more liberty of the press in Paris than in Constantinople—as little indeed as under the new Empire.

† It is but justice to add, that the Moniteur, though thus trammelled by temporary influences, always preserved, in what it was allowed to say, a creditable degree of moderation and tact.

of the day to Robespierre, soliciting a share of the secret service fund, and found amongst his papers:—

'*You must have remarked that the* Moniteur *reports the speeches of the* Mountain *at greater length than the rest. I gave but a very slight sketch of Louvet's first accusation against you, while I gave your answer at full length. I reported the speeches* for *the king's death almost entire; and I only gave some extracts of those on the other side—just as much as was absolutely necessary to show some appearance of impartiality, &c.*—GRANDVILLE.'
—ii. *Papiers de Robespierre*, p. 131.

And, to give the finishing touch to this remarkable instance of fraud and deception, we have to add that the Committee of the Convention, to whom the examination of Robespierre's papers was referred, suppressed in their report these venal passages, which were only revealed when, after the Restoration, the original paper was brought to light.

These considerations have been recalled to our minds by the strange obscurity in which, when we happened to look into the matter, we found the early history of the *Guillotine* involved. We had long searched through the Moniteur and the other leading journals of the time—through the reports of the proceedings of the legislative assemblies—through the *Bulletin des Tribunaux*—the *Bulletin des Loix*, and in short wherever we thought the information most likely to be found, as to when and where this formidable engine made its first appearance, by what law it was sanctioned, and who were the earliest of that innumerable series of victims that perished by it. Little or nothing was to be found. It is only of late years that any one seems to have ventured to produce any details on the subject. In 1830 a paper, rather surgical than historical, in the '*Archives Curieuses*,'* and in 1835 the publication in the '*Revue Retrospective*' of some documents preserved in the Hôtel de Ville, threw some scanty light on this subject. A recent pamphlet of M. Du Bois† gives a more general sketch of the history of the machine itself and of its introduction into modern Revolutionary practice. All these accounts are very imperfect and unsatisfactory, but they afford us an opportunity of bringing into one view all that we have been able to collect on a subject so

* Afterwards published in a separate pamphlet—No. 1, at head of this Essay.

† No. 2, at head of this Essay.

neglected, and yet so worthy, we think, of being accurately known and deeply considered.

It seems unaccountable that the introduction of so very remarkable a change in the mode of execution should not have been a subject of general curiosity and discussion, but is it not still more strange that persons calling themselves *historians*—whose attention might have been excited, not merely by the novelty of the machine, but by the moral and legal questions which led to the invention, and by the terrible, the gigantic consequences which followed its adoption—take little or no notice of it? M. Thiers, for instance, mentions cursorily the death of the first and second *political* victims of the *Revolutionary Tribunal*.—Lacretelle, in a little more detail, names the second and third;—Mignet merely says, 'some persons were condemned;'—and they all, in the course of their narrations, report the death of the King; but in none of the cases do they allude to any *machine*, nor employ any phrase that would not apply to an ordinary decapitation by the stroke of the headsman. It may be said, in explanation of their silence, that the French writers have been naturally reluctant to enter into details so disgraceful to the national character, and have therefore abstained, through patriotism—as the Romans used to do through superstition—from uttering the ill-omened word. But we regret to say that Mr. Alison, who, indeed, is too apt on all occasions to copy implicitly his French models, has fallen into their error, without their patriotic excuse. Of the first victims of the Tribunal and the Guillotine he only says, in the very words of Mignet, 'several persons were *condemned;*' he does not even say *executed*—still less does he give any idea that they died in an unusual way; and even the King's execution is described by the words, 'the descending axe terminated his existence;' which—there having been no preceding allusion to any machine—would have equally described that of Charles I.* In short, those who are hereafter to learn the French Revolution from what are called *Histories*† will see it very

* It was said that the attempt of the executioners to bind the king to the balance-plank (*bascule*) was the occasion of a kind of struggle between him and them, and the cause that the execution was performed with more than usual mutilation, but this was altogether a misrepresentation: see (antè, p. 257) the curious evidence of the executioner himself.

† Nor is this neglect to be objected to the historians alone. In Dr. Rees' great *Encyclopædia* (ed. 1819), neither the man *Guillotin*, nor the instrument *guillotine*, is to be found. The *Penny Cyclopædia* gives a very good account of the instrument.

much curtailed of many of its more terrible, yet most interesting features, and especially of the most prominent of them all—the GUILLOTINE.

We shall endeavour, as far as our limited space and inadequate means will allow, to do something—however little it may be—to supply this general deficiency.

The Guillotine was not originally designed with any view to what turned out to be its most important characteristic—the great numbers of victims that it could dispose of in a short space of time: it is curious, and ought to be to theorists an instructive lesson, that this bloody implement was at first proposed on a combined principle of justice and mercy.

It seems almost too ludicrous for belief, but it is strictly true, that, amongst the *privileges* of the old Noblesse of France which the '*Philosophes*' taught the people to complain of, was the mode of being put to death—why should a noble be only beheaded when a commoner would be hanged? Shakspeare, who penetrated every crevice of human feeling, makes the gravedigger in Hamlet open a grievance on which the French philosophers improved—'*the more pity that great folks should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian.*' Why, the *Philosophes* asked, should the Noblesse 'have countenance' to die otherwise than the Tiers Etat? There was also another liberal opinion then afloat on the public mind—that the *prejudice* which visited on the innocent family of a criminal some posthumous portion of his disgrace was highly unjust and contrary to the rights of man.* Now there happened to be at this time in Paris a physician, one Dr. Guillotin, who professed, probably sincerely, but somewhat ostentatiously, what it was the fashion to call philanthropy; and just before the election of the States-General he published one or two pamphlets in favour of the *Tiers Etat*—liberal and philosophic as he no doubt considered them, but seditious in the eyes of the Parliament of Paris, which made some show of prosecuting the author: this was enough in those days to establish any man's popularity, and Guillotin, though a person, as it turned out, of very moderate ability, was so recommended by his popular

* As early as 1784 this question was proposed by the Society of Arts at Metz as the subject of a Prize Essay, and it is as a competitor for this prize that we first hear of ROBESPIERRE.

pamphlets and by the censure of the Parliament, that he was elected as one of the representatives of Paris to the National Assembly.

We abstract from a work published in the height of republican enthusiasm (1796), and certainly with no bias against the Revolution or its founders, the following account of Dr. Guillotin:—

'By what accident has a man without either talents or reputation obtained for his name a frightful immortality? He *fathered* a work really written by a lawyer—Hardouin—who had too much character to produce it in his own name; and this work having been censured by the Parliament, Guillotin, who assumed the responsibility of it, became *the man of the day*, and owed to it that gleam of reputation which ensured his election to the States-General. He was in truth a *nobody*, who made himself a *busybody*—and by meddling with everything, *à tort et à travers*, was at once mischievous and ridiculous.'—*Portraits des Personnes Celèbres*, 1796.

He made several small attempts at senatorial notoriety by proposing reforms in matters of health and morals, on which he might be supposed to have some kind of professional authority, and amongst others he took up the question of capital punishment—first, with the moral but visionary object of putting down by law the popular prejudice against the families of criminals; secondly, on the political ground that punishments should be equalized; and thirdly, he contended that hanging was a lingering and therefore cruel punishment, while death by decapitation must be immediate.

Small circumstances mix themselves with great results. On the 9th of October, 1789, the National Assembly, in consequence of the tragic exodus of the Court from Versailles, resolved to transfer itself to Paris, and Dr. Guillotin, being one of the representatives of that city, thought it expedient to prepare for himself a good reception from his constituents, and on that very day he gave notice of, and on the next—the 10th—produced, the following series of propositions:—

'I. Crimes of the same kind shall be punished by the same kind of punishment, whatever be the rank of the criminal.

'II. In all cases (whatever be the crime) of capital punishment, it shall be of the same kind—that is, beheading—and it shall be executed by means of a machine [*l'effet d'un simple mécanisme*].

'III. Crime being personal, the punishment, whatever it may be, of a criminal shall inflict no disgrace on his family.

'IV. No one shall be allowed to reproach any citizen with the

punishment of one of his relations. He that shall dare to do so shall be reprimanded by the Judge, and this reprimand shall be posted up at the door of the delinquent; and moreover shall be posted against the pillory for three months.

'V. The property of a convict shall never nor in any case be confiscated.

'VI. The bodies of executed criminals shall be delivered to their families if they demand it. In all cases the body shall be buried in the usual manner, and the registry shall contain no mention of the nature of the death.'

These propositions—embodying the *philosophe* theories, and at best unseasonable—were adjourned, somewhat contemptuously as it seems, without a debate; but on the 1st of December the Doctor brought them forward again—preceding his motion by reading a long and detailed report in their favour, to which—unluckily for the history of the guillotine—the Assembly did not pay the usual compliment of printing it, and no copy was found amongst Guillotin's papers. The account of the debate in the journals is peculiarly meagre, but we gather from them and other quarters some curious circumstances.

The first proposition was voted with little or no opposition. On the second a discussion arose, and the Abbé Maury, with prophetic sagacity, objected to the adoption of decapitation as a general punishment, 'because it might tend to deprave the people by '*familiarizing them with the sight of blood;*' but Maury's objection seems to have made no great impression at a time when no one—not even the sagacious and eloquent Abbé himself—could have foreseen such a prodigality of legal murders—such a deluge of blood as afterwards afforded so practical and so frightful a corroboration of his theoretical suggestion.

But the debate was brought to a sudden conclusion on that day by an unlucky inadvertence of Guillotin himself; who, answering some objections to the 2nd Article, and having represented *hanging* as evidently a tedious and torturing process, exclaimed in a tone of triumph, '*Now, with my machine, I strike you off your head [je vous fais sauter la tête] in the twinkling of an eye, and you never feel it.*' 'Solvuntur risu tabulæ'—a general laugh terminated the debate—and amongst the laughers there were scores who were destined to be early victims of the yet *unborn* cause of their merriment.

Though Dr. Guillotin had talked so peremptorily and indiscreetly

about '*his* machine,' it does not appear that he had as yet prepared even a model, and it is nearly certain that he had no concern in the actual construction of the instrument that was eventually—three years later—adopted; but to which, while yet in embryo, this unlucky burst of surgical enthusiasm was the occasion of affixing his name. It happened thus:—The celebrated Royalist Journal, *Les Actes des Apôtres*, conducted with great zeal and considerable wit by Peltier (afterwards so well known in London), assisted by Rivarol and others, seized on this phrase of Guillotin's as the subject of a song—which, as being the real baptism of the future instrument, is worth quoting:—

'*Sur l'inimitable Machine du Médecin* GUILLOTIN, *propre à couper les têtes, et dite de son nom* GUILLOTINE.

Guillotin,
Médecin,
Politique,
Imagine, un beau matin,
Que pendre est inhumain
Et peu patriotique;
Aussitôt
Il lui fait
Un supplice
Qui sans corde ni poteau,
Supprime du bourreau
L'office.

Le Romain
Guillotin,
Qui s'appréte,
Consulte gens du métier—
Barnave et *Chapelier*,
Même *Coupe-tête*;—
Et sa main
Fait soudain
La machine,
Qui 'simplement' nous tuera,
Et que l'on *nommera*
GUILLOTINE!'

It is singular enough that this song should have given its immortal name to the instrument three years before it actually existed; but it is also remarkable in another way—'*Barnave* and *Chapelier*' were two of the most violent democratic members of the National Assembly, and had been guilty of some indiscreet (to say the least of it) encouragement to the early massacres; *Coupe-tête* was one *Jourdain* (afterwards more widely celebrated for his share in the massacres of Avignon), who derived his title of *Coupe-tête* from having cut off the heads of the two Gardes du Corps, Messrs. Des Huttes and Varicourt, who were murdered in the palace of Versailles on the 6th of October. But—O, divine Justice!—these very patrons of massacre—*Barnave*, and *Chapelier*, and *Coupe-tête*—were themselves all massacred by the Guillotine: Barnave, a deep and interesting penitent, on the 29th of November, 1793; Chapelier, 17th of April, 1794; and Jourdain, covered with the blood of human hetacombs, 27th May, 1794.

The name, however, of *Guillotine*, thus given in derision and by anticipation, *stuck*, as the phrase is, in spite of a momentary attempt to call it the *Louison*, after *M. Louis*, the secretary of the College of Surgeons, who did actually preside over the construction of the machine which Guillotin had only indicated. But it was at first chiefly used as a term of reproach and ridicule; and we read in the *Moniteur* of the 18th of December, 1789, some 'Observations on the motion of Dr. Guillotin for the adoption of a machine which should *behead animals in the twinkling of an eye*,' censuring the 'levity with which some periodical papers have made trivial and indecent remarks,' &c., alluding, no doubt, to the song of the *Actes des Apôtres*, which had a great vogue; but still these 'Observations' afford no details as to any *machine*.*

The subsequent proceedings on Guillotin's propositions are involved in some obscurity. In the reports of the debates it is stated that the discussion, interrupted on the 1st of December, was adjourned to the following day; but on that day we find no mention of it, and it is stated by Guyot that the debate was resumed on the 27th of December; but we find no report of any such debate on that day, and we believe that all that Guyot says of this debate of the 27th of December is a confusion of three debates: the one of the 1st of December, which we have just mentioned; another on the 23rd, on the right of citizenship, which touched incidentally the 3rd and 4th articles of Guillotin's proposition; and a third on the 21st January, 1790, at which we shall soon arrive. A remarkable circumstance in the debate of the 23rd December was, that the Count de Clermont Tonnerre, one of the ablest and most amiable members of the Assembly, but who, like so many other well-meaning persons, was at the outset a dupe to that giddy mania of innovation and that wild pursuit of abstract plausibilities which blasted the first fair promises of the young Revolution—M. de Clermont Tonnerre, we say, took occasion, on the topic of the injustice of the prejudices which attached to the

* Some even of the most violent Jacobinists disapproved Guillotin's humour and attest the effect of the song:—Cette motion (que les condamnés fussent décapités par l'effet *d'un simple mécanisme*) a été faite par le Docteur Guillotin. La machine qu'il a proposée a été appelée *Guillotine*. On a fait à ce sujet une chanson sur l'air du 'Menuet d'Exaudet.' *C'est une douce correction* que le public lui inflige; l'honorable membre a donné des preuves assez fortes de son patriotisme pour que l'on doive *oublier sa motion et la chanson*.—*Prudhomme, Rév. de Paris*, 26 *Décembre*, 1789.

families of criminals, to invoke the sympathy of the Assembly for two other classes of persons who were still injuriously affected by the same kind of prejudice—he meant *Actors* and *Executioners!* If satire had been devising how to ridicule these philosophical legislators, it could scarcely have hit on anything better than an attempt to class *Actors* and *Executioners* in the same category, and to extirpate such prejudices by statute law.

It is but justice to M. de Clermont Tonnerre to say that he saw very soon, though still too late, the danger of the many *liberal* and silly impulses to which he had at first given way, and endeavoured, but in vain, to stay the plague which he unintentionally had helped to propagate; by the recovery of his good sense he lost his popularity, and was massacred on the evening of the 10th of August in a garret where he had taken refuge, by the people whose idol he had been as long as he advocated the dignity of players and the sensibilities of the hangman.

The National Assembly seems to have been reluctant to renew the discussion on Guillotin's propositions, but a case which arose about the middle of January, 1790, proves that, although Guillotin and his machine found little favour in the Assembly, the proposition which he and M. de Clermont had advocated, of removing from a criminal's family any share in his disgrace—false in principle, and impossible in fact—had made, as such plausibilities generally do when the public mind is excited, a great popular impression. The case, very characteristic in all its circumstances, was this.

There were three brothers of a respectable family in Paris of the name of Agasse, the two eldest of whom, printers and proprietors of the *Moniteur*, were convicted for forgery of bank-notes, and sentenced to be hanged. This condemnation excited—from the youth and antecedent respectability of the parties—great public interest. It might be naturally expected that this sympathy would have exerted itself in trying to procure a pardon, or at least some commutation of punishment, for these young men, whose crime was really nothing compared with those of which Paris was the daily and hourly scene; but no! There seems, on the contrary, to have been a pretty general desire that they should suffer the full sentence of the law, in order that the National Assembly and the *good people* of Paris might have a practical opportunity of carrying out the new principle that '*the crime does not disgrace*

the family.' In the evening sitting of the 21st January (a date soon to become still more remarkable in the history of the Guillotine) an Abbé Pepin mounted hastily the tribune of the National Assembly, recalled to its attention Guillotin's propositions, which had been, he said, too long neglected, and stated that a case had now occurred which required the instant passing of the three articles which related to the abolition of the prejudice and of confiscation of property, and to the restoring the body to the family. That most foolish of the National Assemblies loved to act by impulses, and the three articles were enthusiastically passed for the avowed purpose of being applied to the individual case—as they, in fact, were in the following extraordinary manner:—Three days after the passing of the decree the battalion of National Guards of the district of St. Honoré, where the Agasses resided, assembled in grand parade; they voted an address to M. Agasse, the uncle of the criminals, first, to condole with his affliction, and, secondly, to announce their adoption of the whole surviving family as friends and brothers; and, as a first step, they elected the young brother and younger cousin of the culprits to be lieutenants of the Grenadier company of the battalion, and then, the battalion being drawn up in front of the Louvre, these young men were marched forth, and complimented on their new rank by M. de Lafayette, the Commander-in-Chief, accompanied by a numerous staff. Nor was this all: a deputation of the battalion were formally introduced into the National Assembly, and were harangued and complimented by the President on this touching occasion. They were afterwards entertained at a banquet, at which Lafayette—then in more than royal power and glory—placed them at his sides, and '*frequently embraced them.*' They were also led in procession to St. Eustache and other churches, and paraded, with every kind of ostentation, to the public gaze. A public dinner of six hundred National Guards was got up in their honour; numerous patriotic and philanthropic toasts were drunk, and then, in an '*ivresse*,' not altogether of wine, the newspapers say, but of patriotism *and joy*, the two youths were marched back through half Paris, preceded by a band of music, to the house of the uncle, where the rest of the Agasse family, old and young, male and female, came forth into the street to receive the congratulations of the tipsy crowd. Can we imagine any greater cruelty than the making a *show* of the grief of these unhappy people, and thus forcing them to cele-

brate, as it were,—in the incongruous novelties of gold lace and military promotion, and public exhibitions,—the violent death of their nearest and dearest relations?

While these tragical farces were playing, the poor culprits, who did not at all partake of the kind of enthusiasm their case excited, were endeavouring to escape from the painful honour of having this great moral experiment made in their persons: but in vain; their appeals were rejected, and at length they were, on the 8th of February, led forth to execution in a kind of triumph—of which it was remarked that they felt nothing but the aggravation of their own personal misery,—and were hanged with as much tenderness as old Izaak Walton hooked his worm; and, that preliminary process being over, the bodies were delivered with a vast parade of reverence and delicacy to the family. The surviving brother was confirmed in the lucrative property of the '*Moniteur*,' which he enjoyed throughout the Revolution, as his widow did after him, under the title of 'Madame *Veuve* Agasse,' and as we believe her representative does to this hour; and in the great work of Aubert, printed by Didot, called '*Tableaux Historiques de la Révolution*,' there is a plate of the two Agasses going to be hanged, as if it had been a matter of the same historical importance as the *Serment du Jeu de Paume*, or the execution of the King. We hardly know a stronger instance of the characteristic perversity with which the Revolution, in all its transactions, contrived to transmute the abstract feelings of mercy and benevolence into practical absurdity, mischief, and cruelty.

But all this cruel foolery made no difference in the mode of execution; and indeed it was not yet decided that the punishment of death, in any shape, should be maintained in the new constitution. That great question was debated on the 30th of May, 1791—the committee on the Constitution, to whom the question had been referred, proposed the abolition, which, however, after a warm discussion, was negatived, and capital punishment retained. This discussion was remarkable in several ways. Those who thought the maintenance of capital punishments necessary to the safety of society were the first and greatest sufferers by it; while by those who opposed it on pretended principles of humanity it was very soon perverted to the purposes of the most monstrous and bloody tyranny that the world has yet seen. The chairman of the committee, who warmly advocated their views and his own for the

abolition, was *Le Pelletier* de St. Fargeau, an ex-president of the Parliament of Paris, where he had been a leading *frondeur:* at the outset of the States-General he seemed inclined to the Royalist party, but, either from terror or a desire of popularity, soon became a Jacobin.* This strenuous advocate for the abolition of the punishment of death *in any case* voted for the murder of the King, and was himself on the same day assassinated by one Pâris, an ex-Garde du Corps, in a café of the Palais Royal;† but a still more remarkable circumstance was, that the member who distinguished himself by the most zealous, argumentative, and feeling protest against the *shedding of human blood, in any possible case or under any pretext whatsoever*, was, as the reports call him, 'Monsieur DE ROBESPIERRE!'

The fundamental question being thus decided for the retention of capital punishment, the mode of execution came next into discussion, and on the 3rd of June, 1791, the following article was proposed:—

'Every criminal condemned to death shall be beheaded [*aura la téte tranchée*].'

In the debate on this question there were also some noticeable circumstances. M. La Chèze reproduced, rather more diffusely, the Abbé Maury's original objection to familiarising the people to the sight of blood; and it seemed now to produce more impression than it had formerly done. Two years of bloody anarchy had, we presume, a little sobered all minds capable of sobriety; but the Duke de Liancourt, a distinguished professor of philanthropy, employed the recent murders *à la lanterne* as an argument in favour of the new proposition:—

'There was one consideration,' he said, 'which ought to incline the Assembly to adopt the proposal for *beheading*—the necessity of

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* 'Homme faible et riche, qui s'était donné à la *Montagne* par *peur!*'—*Mémoires de Madame Roland*, vol. ii. p. 296.

† The name of the coffee-house keeper was Fevrier, and it shows the temper of the times that at this moment of complicated horrors the public was amused with the following burlesque epitaph on Le Pelletier:—

'Ci-gît Le Pelletier,
Assassiné on Janvier
Chez Fevrier,
A Paris,
Par Pâris.'

Madame Roland suspected, and we incline to believe, that he was not murdered by Pâris, but by *his own* party, to increase the exasperation of the public mind, and ensure the execution of the King.—*Mémoires de Madame Roland*, ubi suprà.

effacing from the social system all traces of a punishment [*hanging*] which has lately been so *irregularly applied*, and which has, during the course of the Revolution, so unfortunately *lent itself to popular vengeance*.'

Irregularly applied! What a designation of a series of most atrocious murders! But the ultra-liberal Duke had soon to learn that these *irregular applications of popular vengeance* were not to be controlled by fine-spun theories. He, too, was pursued, after the 10th of August, by the fury of a bloodthirsty populace; but, more fortunate than M. de Clermont Tonnerre, he escaped from their hands, and passed over into England.*

The article, however, notwithstanding M. de Liancourt's humane argument in its favour, was not passed without some difficulty, and only after two doubtful trials.

Still, however, this was a mere vote without any immediate legal effect till the whole constitution should be ratified: nor, be it observed, was anything said—either in the discussions or in the decrees—about a *machine;* and indeed it seems certain, from documents which we shall quote presently, that it was not yet decided that a machine should be employed at all, and that, on the contrary, the use of the *sword* (not even the axe and block) was still uppermost in men's minds.

At length, however, on the 21st of September, 1791, the new penal code was adopted; and on the 6th of October became, and still continues to be, the law of France. Its 2nd and 3rd articles, tit. 1, are as follow:—

'II. The punishment of death shall consist in the mere privation of life, and no kind of torture shall be ever inflicted on the condemned.

'III. Every person condemned [to a capital punishment] shall be beheaded.'

During all these legislative discussions the old practice of hanging seems to have been going on—sometimes, as M. de Liancourt said, '*irregularly applied*,' under the popular cry of '*Les aristocrates à la lanterne!*'—sometimes also in the regular course of

* He afterwards went to America, where he remained several years and published his Travels in the United States. He obtained permission from Buonaparte to return to France; whence, on the fall of the Empire, he was one of the first who hurried over to Dover to kiss the hands of Louis XVIII., who, however, had not forgotten, and never forgave, his early countenance of the Revolution.

justice; but this last decree now put an end to the judicial practice, without having substituted any other.

At length, however, on the 24th of January, 1792, a person of the name of *Nicholas Jacques Pelletier* was condemned to death by the criminal tribunal of Paris, for robbery and murder. This event (decapitation being now the only legal punishment) brought the question of the precise mode of death to a practical crisis. The magistrates inquired of the Minister how the sentence was to be executed; and, after the delay of a month, the Minister himself and the Directory of the Department of Paris were obliged to have recourse to the Legislative Assembly for instructions. The letter of the Minister—Duport du Tertre—is remarkable for the reluctance with which he enters on the subject, and the deep and almost prophetic horror he expresses at having had to examine its odious details. 'It was,' he said, 'a kind of execution [*espèce de supplice*] to which he had felt himself *condemned*.' This, alas! was but an anticipation of a fatal reality. On the 28th of November, 1793, he himself was condemned by the Revolutionary Tribunal, and suffered on the 29th, by the machine first used under his involuntary auspices, and in company with that same *Barnave*, the first and most prominent patron of revolutionary bloodshedding!*

The concluding part of Duport's letter will show that at this date there was not only no adoption of, but only a very slight allusion to, a *machine*—the idea of which seems to have made its way very slowly; and all parties appear to have understood that the decapitation intended by the law was that which had been the usage in the case of *noble* criminals—by the *sword*. Duport states:—

'3*rd March*, 1792.

'It appears from the communications made to me by the executioners themselves, that, without some *precautions of the nature of those which attracted for a moment the attention of the Constituant Assembly*, the act of decollation will be horrible to the spectators. It will either prove the spectators to be monsters if they are able to bear such a spectacle; or the executioner, terrified himself, will be exposed to the fury of the people, whose very humanity may exasperate them, however cruelly and unjustly, against the executioner.

'I must solicit from the National Assembly an immediate decision; for a case at the moment presses for execution, which,

* It was he, who, in extenuation of the earlier massacres, had made the famous exclamation, '*Ce sang était-il donc si pur?*'

which pretended to legality—was announced in more naked atrocity, and even put into the form of a substantive motion by his brother, Augustine, who, after complaining of the undue and scandalous scruples which the Convention seemed to entertain about doing justice on the most guilty—*du plus scélérat*—of men, proposed to decree at once—

'The National Convention, considering that Louis, late King of the French, has been condemned (*jugé*) by the Nation, that the representatives of the People would betray their own duty and invade the rights of the People if they were to attempt to question its sovereignty, decrees

'*That Louis Capet shall be brought to the bar to declare his original accomplices; to hear sentence of death pronounced upon him, and to be forthwith conducted to execution.*' *

A considerable tumult occurred at this stage of the debate, but it does not appear whether this extravagant proposition was actually put, or whether, as is most likely, it was smothered in the general confusion. We think it worth notice, as containing the essence of the elder Robespierre's argument and the true exposition of the motives of the whole Jacobin party, who had avowed their intention of executing the King long before he was tried, and who had all along boldly employed the words *trial* and *condemnation* as synonymous and identical.

That crime was hardly consummated when the murderers resumed their internecinal hostilities. Indeed, on the very night of the King's condemnation the Girondins made an attempt to turn it to profit against the Jacobins. 'We have but half done our duty,' cried Gensonné, one of the most sober of his party, 'in punishing the tyrant, if we do not punish the authors of the massacres.' Gensonné may perhaps have made this proposition in the hopes of saving Louis; but such an expedient—a comparison between the King and the *massacreurs*—so false—so odious—revolted common sense and common honesty; and the attempt, however intended, failed miserably, as attempted compromises between fear and falsehood on one side, and consistency and audacity on the other, never fail to do. The King expiated his

* Neither the speech nor motion are in the *Moniteur*, but they were printed separately by order of the Convention. The date is not given, but it must have been on the 10th December, when the *Moniteur* states that several members, and Robespierre junior amongst them, opposed the allowing counsel to the King.

being no longer able to support himself, the execution, if persisted in, will become a struggle and a massacre.

'Even in executions of another class [hanging], which do not need anything like the precision that this kind requires, we have seen criminals grow sick at the sight of the execution of their companions—at least they are liable to that weakness: all that is against beheading with the sword. In fact, who could bear the sight of so bloody an execution without feeling and showing some such weakness?

'In the other kind of execution it is easy to conceal those weaknesses from the public, because, in order to complete the operation, there is no necessity that the patient should continue firm and without fear; but in this, if the criminal falters, the execution must fail also.

'How can the executioner have the necessary power over a man who will not or cannot keep himself in a convenient posture?

'It seems, however, that the National Assembly only devised this species of execution for the purpose of preventing the length to which executions in the old way were protracted.

'It is in furtherance of their humane views that I have the honour of giving this forewarning of the many accidents that these executions may produce if attempted by the sword.

'It is therefore indispensable that, in order to fulfil the humane intentions of the National Assembly, some means should be found to avoid delays and assure certainty, by *fixing* the patient so that the success of the operation shall not be doubtful.

'By this the intention of the legislature will be fulfilled, and the executioner himself protected from any accidental effervescence of the public. 'CHARLES HENRY SANSON.'

We think our readers will be surprised at the good sense and decency of M. Sanson's * observations on a very delicate subject, and they will have noticed the gentle hint that he gives that the National Assembly had legislated on a matter they did not understand, and passed a law that would have defeated its own object; but what is most strange is that here is—not only no mention of the *machine* which had made so much noise three years before, but—decisive evidence that it was understood by the executioner himself, as it at first sight seems to have been by everybody else, that the law contemplated execution by the *sword*. But the truth, we believe, was that Guillotin's proposition had been smothered by ridicule and by the detected insignificance of the proposer, and no

* See note relative to Sanson at end of this Essay.

one was desirous of openly associating himself to this odious invention; but that it was all along intended to adopt it seems evident from the care with which all allusion to the more obvious use of the *block and axe* was omitted.

The appeal, however, of the Minister of Justice obliged the Legislative Assembly to solve the question, and they referred it to a committee, who themselves consulted M. Louis, the Secretary of the Academy of Surgery, and, on the 20th of March, *Carlier* (of the same name as the executioner of 1684, who preceded the Sanson family in the office), brought up the report of the Committee, and on the same day the Assembly decreed—

'That the mode of execution proposed by M. Louis, the Secretary of the Academy of Surgeons (which proposal is annexed to the present decree), shall be adopted throughout the kingdom.'

The following is M. Louis's report, which, notwithstanding its length, we think worth reproducing—it is in truth the main feature in the history of the Guillotine, and its conclusions are still the existing law of France on the subject:—

'*Report on the Mode of* Decollation.

'The Committee of Legislation having done me the honour to consult me on two letters addressed to the National Assembly concerning the execution of the 3rd Art. of the 1st Title of the Penal Code, which directs that *every criminal capitally convicted* shall be decapitated (*aura la tête tranchée*); by these letters the Minister of Justice and the Directory of the Department of Paris, in consequence of representations made to them, are of opinion that it is instantly necessary to determine the precise mode of proceeding in the execution of this law, lest, by the defect of the means, or inexperience or awkwardness, the execution should become cruel to the patient and offensive to the spectators, in which case it might be feared that the people, out of mere humanity, might be led to take vengeance on the executioner himself—a result which it is important to prevent. I believe that these representations and fears are well founded. Experience and reason alike prove that the mode of beheading hitherto practised exposes the patient to a more frightful punishment than the mere deprivation of life, which is all the law directs. To obey strictly the law, the execution should be performed in a single moment and at one blow. All experience proves how difficult it is to accomplish this.

'We should recollect what passed at the execution of M. de Lally. He was on his knees—his eyes covered—the executioner struck him

on the back of the neck—the blow did not sever the head, and could not have done so. The body, which had nothing to uphold it, fell on the face, and it was by three or four cuts of a sabre that the head was at length severed from the body. This *hackery* [*hacherie*], if I may be allowed to invent the word, excited the horror of the spectators.

'In Germany the executioners are more expert from the frequency of this class of execution, principally because females of whatever rank undergo no other. But even there the execution is frequently imperfect, though they take the precaution of tying the patient in a chair.

'In Denmark there are two positions and two instruments for decapitation. The mode of execution which may be supposed to be the more honourable is by the sword, the patient kneeling with his eyes covered and his hands free. In the other, which is supposed to attach additional infamy, the patient is bound, and, lying on his face, the head is severed by the hatchet.

'Everybody knows that cutting instruments have little effect when they strike perpendicularly. If examined with a microscope it will be seen that the edges are nothing but a saw, more or less fine, which act only by sliding, as it were, over the body that they are to divide. It would be impossible to decapitate at one blow with a straight-edged axe; but with a convex edge, like the ancient battle-axes, the blow acts perpendicularly only at the very centre of the segment of the circle, but the sides have an oblique and sliding action which succeeds in separating the parts. In considering the structure of the human neck, of which the centre is the vertebral column, composed of several bones, the connexion of which forms a series of sockets, so that there can be no hitting of a *joint*, it is not possible to ensure a quick and perfect separation by any means which shall be liable to moral or physical variations in strength or dexterity. For such a result there is no certainty but in an invariable mechanism, of which the force and effect can be regulated and directed. *This is the mode adopted in England.* The body of the criminal *is* laid on its stomach between two posts connected at top by a cross beam, whence a convex hatchet *is* made to fall suddenly on the patient by the removal of a peg. The back of the hatchet should be strong and heavy enough to perform the object like the weight with which piles are driven. The force, of course, will be in proportion to the height from which it may fall.

'It is easy to construct such an instrument, of which the effect would be certain, and the decapitation will be performed in an instant according to the letter and the spirit of the new law. It will be easy to make experiments on dead bodies, or even on a living sheep. We should then see whether it might not be necessary to

fix the neck of the patient in a semicircle, which should confine the neck just where it joins the hinder bone of the skull; the extremities of this semicircle might be fastened by bolts to the solid parts of the scaffold. This addition, if it shall appear necessary, would create no observation, and would be scarcely perceivable.

'Given in consultation at Paris, this 7th of March, 1792.

'LOUIS.'

Here is no mention of nor allusion to Guillotin or any previous machine, except one supposed to be in use in England; and however strong might be the desire of keeping Guillotin out of sight, it seems hardly possible to imagine that, if he had made any model or given any distinct description of a machine, M. Louis could have treated the matter as he did. We find, however, that while it was thus pending, Rœderer, then Procureur-Général (chief legal authority) of the *Département*, wrote the following private note to Dr. Guillotin:—

'Dear Sir and *Ex-Colleague*,—I should be very much obliged if you would be so good as to come to the office of the Department, No. 4, Place Vendôme, at your earliest convenience. The Directory [of the Department of Paris] is unfortunately about to be called upon to determine the mode of decapitation which will be henceforward employed for the execution of the 3rd article of the Penal Code. I am instructed to invite you to communicate to me the important ideas which you have collected and compared with a view of mitigating a punishment which the law does not intend to be cruel.

'10th March, 1792.' 'RŒDERER.

—*Revue Retrospective*, p. 14.

It does not appear whether Guillotin waited on the Procureur-Général: at all events, the interview produced nothing, for we see that Louis's report had been made three days earlier, and was finally adopted without variation by the Convention 20th March.

Here then concludes all that we have been able to find of the connexion of Guillotin with the terrible instrument to which he unfortunately became godfather. We shall add a few words on his subsequent life. Our readers have seen that Rœderer addresses him as 'Ex-Colleague.' The Constituant Assembly had been dissolved in the preceding autumn; and Guillotin's last labours in that assembly were of a nature that exposed him to an additional degree of ridicule and contempt; and he who had been so lately

cried up as a *patriote philosophe* was now by the very same voices denounced as an aristocrat.

'Guillotin le médecin aristocrate a dépensé 1,200,000 livres à remuer les plâtres, à placer et déplacer des ventouses et des latrines.' —(*Prudhomme, Rev. de Paris*, 10. 543.)

Certain it is that he was not thought of for any of the subsequent assemblies. His ephemeral and accidental popularity had vanished, and the instrument which has 'damned him to everlasting fame' had not yet appeared—so he seems to have sunk back into more than his original obscurity, to which was soon superadded the increasing horror of the times. His retreat, indeed, was so profound, that it was said, and readily believed, that he too had fallen a victim to his own invention.* But it was not so; he was indeed imprisoned during the Jacobin reign of terror—his crime being, it is said (*Guyot*, p. 8), that he testified an indiscreet indignation at a proposition made to him *by Danton* to superintend the construction of a triple guillotine. There is no doubt that a *double* and perhaps a triple instrument was thought of, and it is said that such a machine was made and intended to be erected in the great hall of the Palais de Justice, but it was certainly never used.†

The general gaol delivery of the 9th Thermidor released Guillotin, and he afterwards lived in a decent mediocrity of fortune at Paris, esteemed, it is said, by a small circle of friends, but overwhelmed by a deep sensibility to the great, though we cannot say wholly undeserved, misfortune which had rendered his name ignominious and his very existence a subject of fearful curiosity. He just lived to see the Restoration, and died in his bed, in Paris, on the 26th of May, 1814, at the age of seventy-six.

Poor Guillotin paid dearly for the foolish vanity of affecting to be an inventor, when he was only a plagiary; and it seems very strange how so general an opinion should have prevailed as to the *novelty* of the invention, when we find M. Louis, in the very first distinct description of the machine, representing it as one *already known in England*—indeed, his expressions seem to imply that it

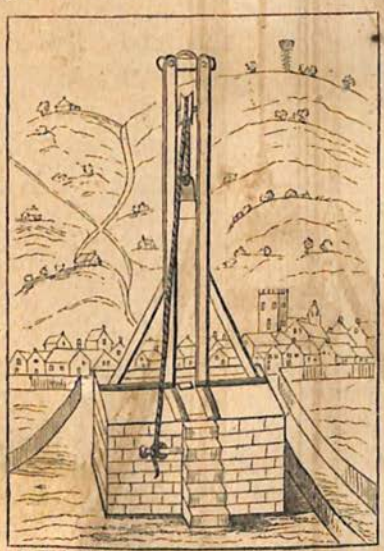
* This was so generally believed, that Mr. Todd, in introducing the word *Guillotine* into his edition of Johnson's Dictionary, states it as a fact.

† Fouquier-Tinville himself stated, at his trial, that, though he frequently tried and condemned above 250 within the *décade* (nine days), the Committee of Public Safety complained that it was too slow, and it was intended that four ambulatory criminal tribunals should be created, each to be accompanied by a locomotive guillotine!—*Procès de Fouquier*, No. 29.

was then actually and habitually in use amongst us. We know not whence M. Louis could have taken up this notion. The *English* mode of decapitation had always been by the block and the axe—with one ancient local exception—that of what was called the *Halifax Gibbet*, which was indeed a perfect guillotine, and had been, of old, employed in certain peculiar cases arising in the adjoining district.

If M. Louis had inquired a little farther, he would have found not only that the implement was not in general use in England, but had not been used for near 150 years in the small district to which it belonged. He would also have easily discovered such descriptions and portraits of the like machines as would have saved him a great deal of trouble in the actual construction of that on which he was employed.

We have before us an old print of the Halifax gibbet, with a legend, '*John Hoyle, del*^{t}., 1650,' which had been often reproduced long before Guillotin was born—as in a little book called 'Halifax and its Gibbet Law,' 1708; and Bishop Gibson's edition of Camden's 'Britannia,' 1722. The following is a copy of Hoyle's print:*—



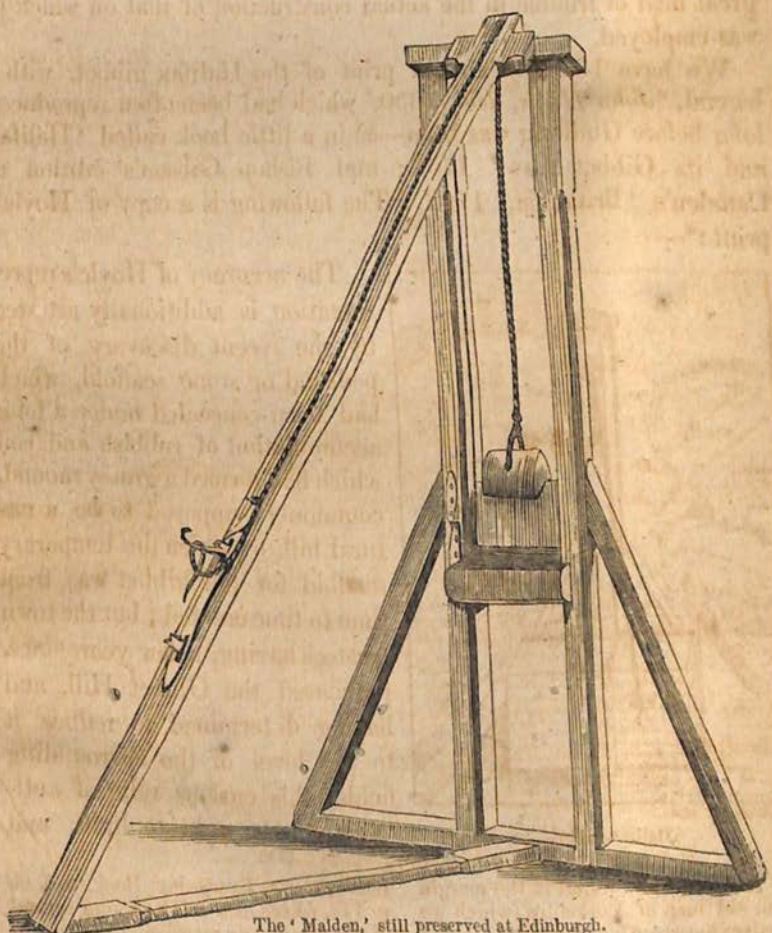
Halifax Gibbet.

The accuracy of Hoyle's representation is additionally attested by the recent discovery of the pedestal or stone scaffold, which had been concealed under a long accumulation of rubbish and soil which had formed a grassy mound, commonly supposed to be a natural hill, on which the temporary scaffold for the gibbet was from time to time erected; but the town trustees having, a few years since, purchased the Gibbet Hill, and having determined to reduce it to the level of the surrounding fields, this curious relic of antiquity was brought to light, and

* It is also to be found in the margin of an old map of Yorkshire (which we ourselves have seen), and which is copied into Hone's Every-day Book, vol. i. p. 147, where also will be found several of the particulars mentioned in the text.

has been since carefully developed; and except some dilapidation of the upper surface and of one of the steps, it presents a perfect corroboration of the evidence of the prints. The ancient axe is still in the possession of the lord of the manor of Wakefield, to which this extraordinary jurisdiction belonged. Mr. Pennant had so recently as 1774 published an account of the Halifax gibbet, as we have described it, and adds,—

'This machine of death is now destroyed; but I saw one of the same kind in a room under the Parliament House at Edinburgh, where it was introduced by the Regent Morton, who took a model of it as he passed through Halifax, and at length suffered by it himself. It is in the form of a painter's easel, and about ten feet high;



The 'Malden,' still preserved at Edinburgh.

at four feet from the bottom is a crossbar, on which the felon places his head, which is kept down by another placed above. In the inner edges of the frame are grooves; in these are placed a sharp axe, with a vast weight of lead, supported at the very summit by a peg; to that peg is fastened a cord, which the executioner cutting, the axe falls, and does the affair effectually.'—*Pennant's Tour*, vol. iii. p. 365.

This instrument, strangely called the *Maiden*, is still in existence in Edinburgh, and as it has never, that we know of, been engraved, we think the accompanying representation will not be unacceptable to our readers. It will be observed that, in this model, the cord, instead of being *cut*, as stated by Pennant, was *released* by a kind of latch.

Near thirty years prior to Pennant's publication, the execution of the Scotch lords for the Rebellion of 1745 by the axe and block seems to have recalled the obsolete *Maiden* to notice, for we find in the '*London Magazine*' for April, 1747, the annexed representation of it:—

Scottish 'Maiden.'

Neither Guillotin nor Louis seems to have seen any of these drawings; nor, as we have said, can we guess on what authority the latter supposes that this mode of decapitation was *in actual use in England*; for there had been no execution by the Halifax gibbet since 1650, and the last of the very few by the Scottish *maiden* were the Marquis of Argyle, in 1661,* and his son the Earl, in 1685,—the latter declaring, as he pressed his lips on the block, that it was the sweetest *maiden* he had ever kissed.†

An anonymous friend of Dr. Guillotin's, quoted by Guyot, states that *his* ideas were formed, not from these English prece-

* 'His head was separated from his body by the descent of the *maiden*.'—4 *Laing*, p. 11.

† Scott's Prose Works, vol. xxiv., p. 280.

dents—about which he probably knew nothing, though recalled to public attention in the then so recent work of Pennant—but from a passage in an anonymous work called 'Voyage Historique et Politique de Suisse, d'Italie, et d'Allemagne,' printed from 1736 to 1743, in which is found the following account of the execution at Milan, in 1702, of a Count Bozelli:—

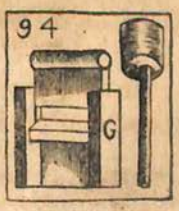
'A large scaffold was prepared in the great square, and covered with black. In the middle of it was placed a great block, of the height to allow the criminal, when kneeling, to lay his neck on it between a kind of gibbet which supported a hatchet one foot deep and one and a half wide, which was confined by a groove. The hatchet was loaded with an hundred pounds weight of lead, and was suspended by a rope made fast to the gibbet. After the criminal had confessed himself, the penitents, who are for the most part of noble families, led him up on the scaffold, and, making him kneel before the block, one of the penitents held the head under the hatchet; the priest then reading the prayers usual on such occasions, the executioner had nothing to do but cut the cord that held up the hatchet, which, descending with violence, severed the head, which the penitent still held in his hands, so that the executioner never touched it. This mode of executing is so sure that the hatchet entered the block above two inches.'—*Guyot*, p. 5.

This was the same machine which, under the name of '*mannaia*,' was common in Italy, and is described very minutely and technically by Le Père Labat in his '*Voyage en Italie*,' 1730, as the more honorific mode of capital punishment.

But the most curious, though not the most exact, of all the precedents for the guillotine is that which is found in Randle Holme's 'Academy of Armoury,' 1678, in which he describes a family (whose name is not given) as *bearing* heraldically,—

'*Gules*, a heading-block fixed between two supporters, and an axe placed therein; on the sinister side a maule: *all proper*.'

And this strange coat-of-arms is thus figured:

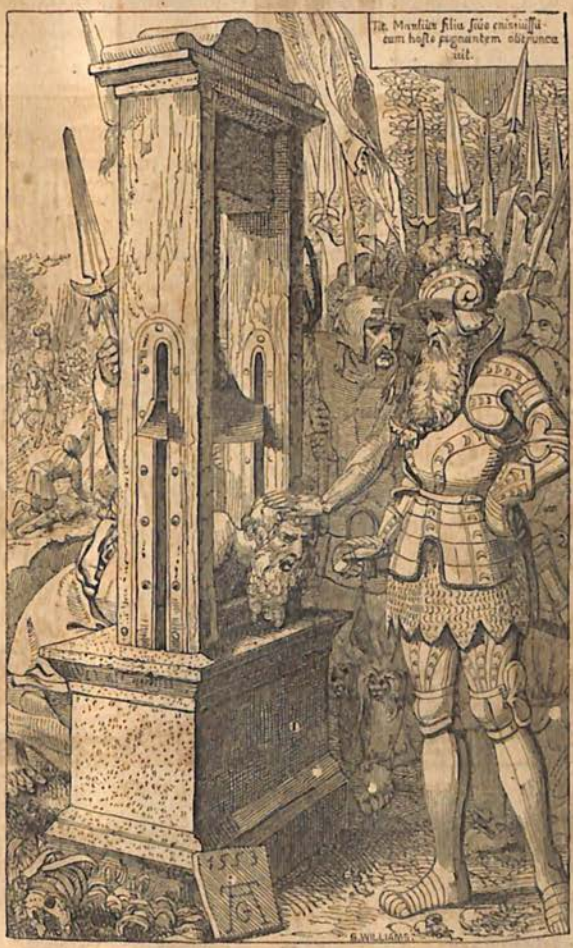


Holme adds,—

'That this was the Jews' and Romans' way of beheading offenders, *as some write*, though others say that they used to cut off the heads of such with a sharp two-handed sword. However, this way of decollation was by laying the neck of the malefactor on the block, and

then setting the axe upon it, which lay in a rigget [groove] on the two sideposts or supporters. The executioner, with the violence of a blow on the head of the axe with his heavy maule [mallet], forced it through the man's neck into the block. I have seen a draught of the like heading instrument, where the weighty axe (made heavy for that purpose) was raised up, and fell down in such a riggeted frame, which being suddenly let to fall, the weight of it was sufficient to cut off a man's head at one blow.'—p. 312.

We know not where it is written by any contemporaneous authority that this was a mode of execution among the Jews and Romans, but there are engravings and woodcuts of the sixteenth century which carry back guillotines of great elaboration to the



Death of Titus Manlius.—(Aldegraver, 1553.)

times of antiquity. We have now before us two copperplate engravings of the German school, the one by George Pencz (who died in 1550), and the other by Henry Aldegraver, of which the preceding cut is a copy, which bears the date of 1553, both representing the death of the son of *Titus Manlius*, by an instrument identical in principle with the guillotine, though somewhat more decorated.

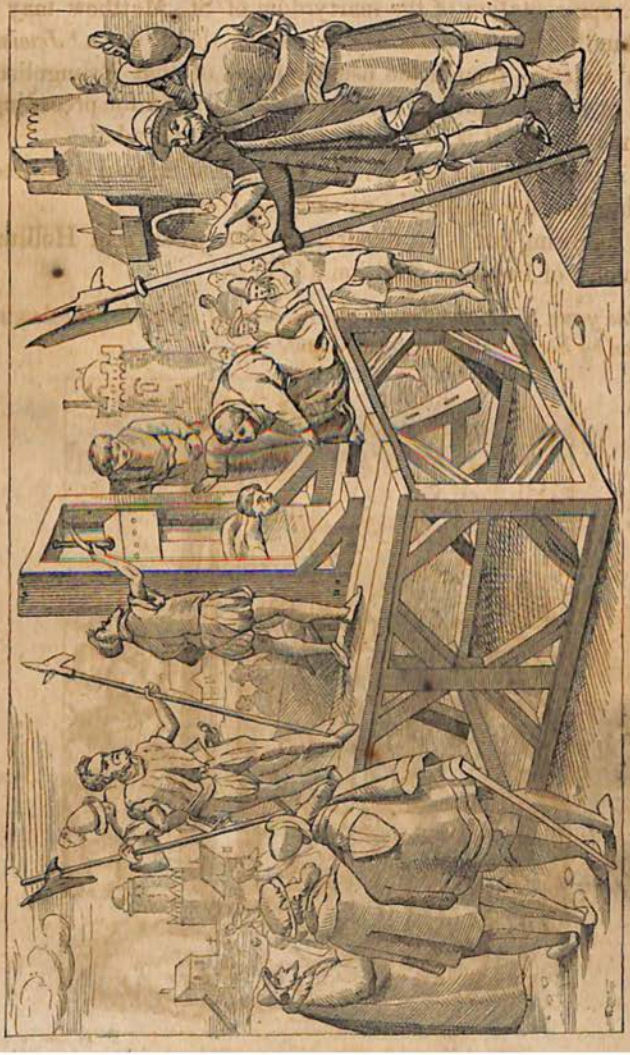
Execution of a Spartan.—(A. Bocchi, 1555.)

We have also in our possession '*Symbolicæ Questiones de universo Genere*,' by Achilles Bocchi, quarto, 1555, of which the eighteenth symbol represents a *Spartan* about to die by a kind of guillotine.

The metrical legend of the symbol runs :—

'Damnatus ab Ephoris, *Lacon*
Cum duceretur ad necem, et voltu admodum
Hilari esset ac læto, &c. &c.'

In Lucas Cranach's woodcuts of the 'Martyrdom of the Apostles,' printed at Wittenberg in 1539, and reprinted in 1549, there is the following representation of the death of St. Matthew by the guillotine, with a legend to this effect—'It is said that his head was



Death of St. Matthew.—(Lucas Cranach, 1539.)

chopped off by a falling-axe (*fallbiel*), *after the manner of the Romans.*'

We find in a journal of the late Mr. J. G. Children, F.R.S., dated in 1840, that he found 'on one of the walls of the Rathhaus of Nuremberg, a painting of a man being beheaded by a guillotine —the painting is 319 years old.' Mr. Children unluckily does not mention the subject of the fresco, but, as the Rathhaus was painted by Albert Durer, it may have been that of the German prints of Titus Manlius, which are much in his style.

The representation of the martyrdom of St. Matthew may have been Randle Holme's authority for saying that it was a '*Jewish* and *Roman*' practice, though the usual symbol of that Evangelist is a *hatchet* or *halberd*, such as the attendants carry in the preceding cut, with one of which it is generally said he was beheaded.

But it has surprised us still more to find that Ireland is represented as having had her guillotine as early as 1307.

The following cut is an illustration of a passage in Hollinshed's 'Chronicles of Ireland,' (Edition 1577) :—

'*In the yeere* 1307, *the first of April, Murcod Ballagh was beheaded near to Merton by Sir David Caunton, Knight.*'

Death of Murcod Ballagh.—(Hollinshed's Chron., 1577.)

The following cut, representing the Martyrdom of St. Pancratius, is from the 'Catalogus Sanctorum' of Pet. de Natabus, printed 1519 :—

Martyrdom of St. Pancratius.—(Peter de Natabus, 1519.)

The foregoing prints or cuts are, of course, no evidence that such a mode of execution was practised at the assigned dates. They only prove that it was known to the illustrators of the works where they appear.

It is sufficiently curious that none of the French literati or legislators who originally busied themselves with this subject should have happened to meet with any of these representations of the machine, which are, as we see, by no means rare ; but it is still more strange that they should not have recollected its existence in their own comparatively modern history. We read, in the 'Memoires de Puysegur,' that the great Marshal de Montmorenci was beheaded at Toulouse in 1632 by such an instrument :—

'In that province they make use [for capital executions] of a kind of hatchet, which runs between two pieces of wood ; and when the head is placed on the block below, the cord is let go, and the hatchet descends and severs the head from the body. When he [M. de M.] had put his head on the block, his wound [received in the fight in which he was taken] hurt him, and he moved his head, but said, "I don't do so from fear, but from the soreness of my wound." Father Arnoul was close to him when they let go the cord of the hatchet: the head was separated clean from the body, and they fell one on one side and the other on the other.'—*Mém. de Puys.*, vol i. p. 137.

We conclude from all this that this mode of execution was common

on the Continent in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and yet had passed into such entire desuetude and oblivion as to have appeared as a perfect novelty when proposed by Dr. Guillotin; and this is still more surprising, because it seems that an execution by a similar instrument had been a year or two before the Revolution exhibited in Paris, at one of the minor theatres of the Boulevard, in a harlequin farce called '*Les Quatre Fils Aymon.*'*

This is certainly a striking illustration of the proverb that there is nothing new under the sun; and we are at a loss to account for the negligence of both Guillotin and Louis, who, being aware that such an instrument had been in use in Italy and England, seem to have made no inquiry after plans or drawings; though we have little doubt that all we have mentioned, and perhaps many more, were to be found in the Bibliothèque of the Rue de Richelieu.

But, after all, it was neither Guillotin nor Louis who constructed (invention is out of the question) the instrument which was actually adopted: for while all these proceedings were going on in Paris, the same difficulties as to the execution of malefactors had occurred in the departmental tribunals, and an officer of the criminal court at Strasburg, named Laquiante, had made a design of a machine *à décapiter*, and employed one *Schmidt* a forte-piano maker, to execute it. Dubois gives a copy of this design, which was very ill-contrived, being more like Randle Holme's armorial bearings than the perfect guillotine.

As soon as the Legislative Assembly had decided to adopt M. Louis's *proposition*, we presume that he set about preparing a model (his report distinctly negatives the idea that he had as yet done so), and Rœderer, having obtained the sanction of the Minister of Finance for the expense, called upon a person of the name of Guidon, who had, it seems, the office or contract '*pour la fourniture des bois de justice*,' to give an estimate for the construction of Louis's machine. Guidon (5th April, 1792) estimated the work at 5660 francs (about 226*l.*), and, when remonstrated with on the exorbitancy of the charge, he replied 'that the high charges arose from his workmen demanding *enormous wages, from a prejudice against the object in view.*' On which Rœderer remarks, 'The prejudice, indeed, exists; but I have had offers from other persons to under-

* Dictionnaire National 1790, t. p. 80, which quotes Camille Desmoulins.—Portraits des Hommes Célèbres, 1re Guillotin.—But M. Guyot doubts the fact, p. 6.

take the work, provided they should not be asked to sign contracts, or in any other way have their *names exposed as connected with this object.*' This is very remarkable, and affords a practical confirmation of Maury's apprehension, for we see that the artificers of Paris, even so far forward in the Revolution as April, 1792, shrank from any avowed connexion with the instrument which, after a few months' exercise, became the delight of the Parisian mob, and not of the mob alone, and was absolutely canonised in the philosophical rubric as *La Sainte Guillotine*—nay, it became the model of ornaments for women, and of toys for children. These were sold by permission of the police in the streets, and the toymen furnished living sparrows to be decapitated by the instruments. Just before the trial of the Queen, one of these *toys* was presented to her son, then a prisoner in the Temple, by the notorious Chaumette, who, within a few months, died by the object of his predilection.

In the mean time it seems that Schmidt, who had been employed by the officer at Strasburg, offered to make a machine for 960 francs (38*l.*); this offer was accepted, and he was put in communication with M. Louis; and Schmidt became, in fact, the *inventor* and constructor of *the* instrument that was finally adopted. This is proved incontestably, because, Schmidt's price of 960 francs having been found to be also exorbitant, 'the real value not being above 305 livres, exclusive of the leather bag which was to receive the head, or 329 livres including the bag,' it was resolved, in consideration that there were eighty-three instruments to be furnished, one to each department, that 500 francs (20*l.*) would be a liberal recompense: but it was thought fair to give M. Schmidt, '*as the inventor*,' the preference of the new contract. And again; when Schmidt refused the contract at so low a rate, he was recommended to favour as being '*l'inventeur* de la machine à décapiter;' and when at last the order for the Departments was about to be transferred to the other contractor, Schmidt took out, or at least threatened to take out, an exclusive patent as *the inventor of the machine*, to the exclusion of both the Government and the contractor. (*Lettre de Rœderer à Clavière, Rev. Ret.*, p. 29.) We know not how this by-battle ended—the last letter on the subject is dated the 6th of August, 1792—but then came the 10th of August, and in the anarchy which ensued all questions of right or property—even those connected with the triumphant Guillotine herself—were confounded

and lost. In all these transactions there is no mention of, nor allusion to, Guillotin; and as we have before said, the instrument was, at its first actual appearance, called the *Louison*—but this name had no success; indeed M. Louis made no pretence to the invention, and he was soon forgotten; for, by another strange fatality attending the ominous machine, M. Louis himself died within a month of the day that it was first brought into actual operation.

While all this was going on, convicts for various crimes were accumulating in the different prisons of the kingdom, and the local authorities in the Departments pressed to have their respective machines with a savage eagerness of which many of themselves had soon to repent in tears and blood. At last, on the 17th of April, 1792, after a great many delays and postponements, an actual experiment was made of Schmidt's instrument, under the inspection of Sanson, in the great hospital of Bicêtre, on several dead bodies, which was so entirely successful that the order was issued for the execution, on Monday the 23rd, of the wretched Pelletier, whose case had led to all these proceedings, and who had been lingering under his sentence for near three months. It seems, however, that he was not executed till the 25th, as Rœderer writes a letter dated that day to Lafayette, to say that, as the execution by the mode of beheading will no doubt occasion a great crowd in the Place de Grève, he begs the General will direct the *gendarmes* who are to attend the execution not to leave the place till the scaffold, &c., shall be removed; and we find, in a Revolutionary journal called the '*Courier Extraordinaire, par M. Duplain*,' of the date of the 27th April, 1792, the following paragraph:—

'*Paris.*—They made yesterday the first trial of the *little Louison*, and cut off a head. One *Pelletier*—not him* of the *Actes des Apôtres*—was the subject of the melancholy experiment. I never in my life could bear to see a man hanged; but I own I feel a still greater aversion to this species of execution. The preparations make one shudder, and increase the moral sufferirg; as to the physical pain, I caused a person to attend, who repeats to me that it was the matter of the

* M. Peltier (whose name was frequently mis-spelled *Pelletier*) luckily escaped to England soon after the 10th of August, or his execution would assuredly have very soon gratified M. Duplain's evident wish that *he* had been the sufferer. *Duplain himself was guillotined 9th July*, 1794.

twinkle of an eye. The people seemed to wish that M. Sanson had his *old gallows*, and were inclined to say,—

Rendez-moi ma potence *de bois,*
Rendez-moi ma potence.' *

The date of articles in a paper published the 27th would be the 26th, and of course the '*yesterday*' of this extract would be the 25th; and we have found passages to the same effect in one or two other journals; and yet it is not absolutely certain that Pelletier was the first *living* body that the guillotine struck; for though he was certainly the first who suffered *at Paris*, there seems some doubt whether the *Procureur-Général* of Versailles did not anticipate Rœderer by a day. We have evidence in the papers published by the 'Revue Retrospective' that one Challan, the Procureur-Général of Versailles, was exceedingly anxious for the machine, and had used every means to obtain an early specimen; and we find in the 'Journal of Perlet,' 25th April, 1792, p. 198, the following passage:—

'It is supposed that the punishment of death was yesterday [*either the 23rd or 24th*] inflicted at Versailles on two criminals by the new mode of decollation, and that it *will* be immediately employed in this capital on a journeyman butcher convicted of murder (assassinat).'

This seems almost decisive; but we still suspect that Perlet's anticipation that the two men had been executed the day before, meaning either the 23rd or 24th, was erroneous, and that the execution at Paris was the first; for on the 19th of April Rœderer acquaints his impatient colleague of Versailles that, although he had bespoken him an instrument, it could not be ready for some days, and directs him not to fix the day for the first execution. It is, therefore, hardly possible that the zeal of M. Challan could have outrun Rœderer by two days.

However that may be, it is clear that in the execution of Pelletier, on the 25th of April at Paris, and in several others which soon followed, the new machine performed its terrible duty with complete success, and amidst, as far as appears from the press, an almost

* A parody of the burden of a popular song—

Rendez-moi mon écuelle de bois,
Rendez-moi mon écuelle—

which had lately been rendered still more popular by a witty parody of it by Peltier against the Jacobin journalist Gorsas, who had said that the very shifts of the King's aunts—which had been seized from them in a popular riot—belonged to the people—

Rendez-moi les chemises de Gorsas,
Rendez-moi les chemises.

incredible degree of public indifference. Our surprise, however, at the general silence as to so portentous an exhibition is in a slight degree modified when we recollect that at this time the instrument was not, as it afterwards became, a permanent spectacle; it was kept in store, and brought forth and fitted together for each special occasion; it was erected very early in the morning, and removed immediately after the execution, so that in fact few saw it but those who were greedy of such sights; and it challenged little more notice than the ordinary gibbets of M. Guidon '*fournisseur des bois de justice.*'

We know, however, that on the 27th of July there was an imperfect execution, which created some public disapprobation; the swelling of the wooden grooves having prevented the proper fall of the axe. After this accident the grooves were made of metal; and we believe there never after occurred any instance of failure—we, at least, have heard of none.

And now we find the machine taking officially, universally, and irrevocably, the name of *Guillotine;* and a few days after the execution of Pelletier we meet it in *Prudhomme's* * Journal of *Les Révolutions de Paris* (28th April, 1792), in a way that would remove all doubt, if any indeed could still exist, that long before the 10th August the Jacobins avowed their intentions of bringing the King to that species of death; two lines of Malherbe's beautiful ode on the death of Rose Duperier, descriptive of the mortality of all mankind, being applied (alas! too prophetically) to threaten the *King* with his impending fate from the new machine:—

'*Inscription proposée pour la Guillotine.*

'Et la garde qui veille aux barrières du Louvre
N'en défend pas nos Rois.'—*Rév. de Par.*, No. 146.

And now, just as the machine had attained its mechanical perfection, occurred that event which was to call it into full activity as a political engine, and to develop in it that aptitude for wholesale murder which was, we are satisfied, one of the main causes of the maniacal cruelty with which it was employed; facility begat use,

* We must say, however, for Prudhomme the second, that he repented and made some amends, but not until after the Revolution had pillaged his house, broken his presses, suppressed his famous journal, turned his family into the street, and put himself into prison, for some slight phrase in one of his numbers at which some of his fellow-Jacobins took offence. Prudhomme, like the rest, grew reasonable when he found the general madness dangerous to himself.

and multitudes were sent to the other world merely because it had become so very easy to send them! Voltaire had already characterised his countrymen as a mixture of the monkey and the tiger; that the tiger predominated was sufficiently proved even before the *guillotine* came into operation; but without this *massacre-made-easy* invention the tiger would have much sooner become, if not satiated at least wearied, with slaughter.

The TENTH OF AUGUST came. We shall say no more about that fatal day than to observe, in reference to our present subject, that it affords a characteristic instance of the effrontery and falsehood by which the whole Revolution was conducted, and the most revolting exemplification of that peculiarly French proverb—*les vaincus ont toujours tort.* For while the two hostile parties—Girondists and Jacobins—that divided the Assembly were each claiming to themselves the exclusive *merit* of having *concerted* and conducted that *glorious* day, they for a moment suspended their mutual enmities and recriminations to create a special Tribunal to punish the Royalists as being, forsooth, the instigators and perpetrators of those very events which they zealously claimed as the result of their own patriotic counsels and exertions.

The Legislative Assembly, indeed, at first showed some prudent apprehension of this Extraordinary Tribunal, and seemed inclined to limit its powers to the single question of what it called the '*Crimes of the 10th of August*'—but this hesitation was not to the taste of the victorious populace, and produced a supplementary insurrection, which menaced the *Manége* * with the fate of the *Château.* Robespierre (who was not of this Assembly) headed a deputation of the Commune of Paris, and threatened the legislators in plain terms with the vengeance of the people if they did not institute a tribunal with, what he called, adequate powers: the inconsistent, and intimidated Assembly submitted; and Vergniaud and Brissot, already cowering under the superior art and audacity of Robespierre and Danton, consented to the creation of a power that, with an impartiality worthy of its origin, sent successively to the guillotine not Royalists only, but Brissot and Vergniaud, and, in due time, Danton and Robespierre themselves.

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* The Constituant and Legislative Assemblies (as well as the Convention, for a few months) sat in what had been the *manége* or riding-house of the Château des Tuileries. This *manége* stood in the centre of what is now the Rue de Rivoli, nearly in front of the site of the well-known *Hôtel Meurice.*

The logic on this occasion, as well as the force, was on the side of Robespierre; for, the '*10th of August*' having been now adopted and canonised as a patriotic conception and triumph, the treating any of the circumstances that had brought it about as *crimes* would have been preposterous; and it turned out, in point of fact, that the tribunal, after it had convicted one Swiss officer, and acquitted another, no more inquired into the *10th of August* than it did into the *St. Barthélemi*, and became eventually nothing more or less than—as the *Conventional* Dupin energetically called it—'*the first step to the scaffold.*' From this moment the Guillotine became, not an instrument of justice, but the murderous weapon of political factions, of private enmities—nay, when factions and enmities had been killed off, of the wanton spontaneities of blood-drunken insanity.*

We find in the '*Souvenirs de Soixante-treize Ans,*' by M. Verneuil, a member of the Assembly, the following passage relative to these executions, which, we think, in so great a dearth of contemporaneous information, worth quoting, particularly as the book, which seems to have been only printed in a country town (Limoges), is little known:—

'After the 10th August they had organised an extraordinary tribunal for judging the pretended conspirators of that day. The first† victim was a literary man, editor of a Royalist journal: he was executed in my neighbourhood—Place du Carrousel. I was invited to go into a house hard by, whence I should see the *play* of the new instrument of death. I excused myself; but from the window of my own entresol I was curious to observe, as the spectators were returning, the impression that it made upon the public. It appeared to me that in general they said, '*Mais ce n'est rien*' ['*Tis nothing at all*], in allusion, no doubt, to the quickness of the execution. M. Guillotin does not deserve the sad honour of giving his name to this new instrument, but rather M. Louis, perpetual secretary of the Academy of Surgeons.'—*Souvenirs de Soixante-treize Ans* (Limoges, 1836), pp. 168, 169.

We have here to observe that Sanson, the chief executioner,

* An account of the principal political victims of the guillotine will be found at p. 440, *et seq.*, in the Essay on The Revolutionary Tribunals.

† Here was a member of the Assembly—and of the Committee which had decided the adoption of the guillotine—resident close to the place of execution, who thought that Durosoi was the *first* victim of the tribunal, though Dangremont had been executed four days previous.

and his two brothers, had been themselves sent to prison after the 10th of August, on the monstrous hypothesis that, 'if the Court had succeeded on that day, the Sansons were to have hanged the patriots.' Their real offence was that they had somehow offended the patriot Gorsas, the newspaper editor before-mentioned, whose Jacobinical violence, in a few days after, procured his election into the Convention—a woful elevation, as we shall see presently! The assistance, however, of the Sansons was necessary to the executions; and the three brothers were brought in a hackney-coach, and in custody, from the Conciergerie to the Carrousel, for the execution of Dangremont, and taken back again. They were again brought forth for the execution of La Porte, and again taken back; after the execution of Durosoi they were released, but they were again arrested within a few days, and were only removed from the *Abbaye* just before the massacre began; and then the absurdity of the pretence for which they had been sent to prison, and the necessary value of their services, becoming more apparent, they were set at liberty, and in the course of the ensuing year were called upon to exercise their ministry upon their old antagonist, Gorsas, who was the first member of the Convention sent to the scaffold.

We have scanty records of the *ordinary* execution of justice during the revolutionary paroxysm. We suspect that there were comparatively few punishments but those of a political nature. We find that on the 14th July, an Abbé Geoffroi, ci-devant Vicaire-Général, was executed on the *Place de Grève* for forgery of assignats; and again, on the 27th of August, 1792, three persons, who seem to have been of a superior rank in life, and are designated in the Moniteur as '*Messieurs Vimal, L'Abbé Sauvade*, and *Guillot*,' were executed as accomplices in the same or a similar forgery. These parties had been tried in the ordinary courts, before the new tribunal was created, but they had appealed, and the appeal had been decided against them, though their guilt is very doubtful; they were now executed, and it was in exhibiting one of these heads to the people that the younger Sanson fell off the scaffold and was killed. Some other executions of the same class seem also to have given employment to the Guillotine, but we have no details.

From the time of the installation of the Revolutionary Tribunal, it seems that the Guillotine was not removed, as it at first used to

be, after each execution, but was for some time kept stationary in the Carrousel;* about the middle of October it appears to have been removed for one day to the Place de Grève for the execution of nine emigrants condemned by a military commission; but it was again removed on the 30th of October to the Place Louis XV., now called *de la Révolution*, for the execution of two of the robbers of the *Garde-Meuble*, which our readers know was situated on the north side of that square.

It is quite clear that the Massacres had done what the Tribunal had been intended to do, and had in truth superseded it—those whom it was meant to try had been more expeditiously murdered—and, therefore, in order that it might have something to occupy its time, the ordinary criminal business of the metropolis was, by a decree of the 11th of September, 1792, transferred to it; and it was in consequence of this decree that it tried and sent to the guillotine the robbers of the *Garde-Meuble*, and was busy with the trial of many minor offences, when suddenly, without notice or reason given, on the morning of the 1st of December (misdated, with the usual inaccuracy of the bulletins of these revolutionary courts, 31st of November), the tribunal found itself dissolved by a decree of the preceding day. The sudden suppression of this formidable tribunal, the creation of which had occasioned such violent discussions, seems to have taken place without debate, and almost without notice. It is scarcely alluded to in any of the histories, not even in that especially calling itself a '*History of the Revolutionary Tribunal*,' published in 1815, in two volumes; nay, not in the periodical publications of the day; and, in fact, this tribunal of the 17th of August, 1792, has been always treated as if *it* and the still more celebrated Revolutionary Tribunal created 10th of March, 1793, were the *same*,—only that at the latter date larger powers were conferred on it. No doubt the spirit that created the two tribunals, and many of the members that composed them, were the same, but in point of fact they were wholly distinct. The suppression of the first took place in the height of the agitation preliminary to the trial of the King, and we are satisfied that it must have had some urgent and most important motive, and one probably connected with

* So it would seem from the evidence of Peltier and others, but we rather believe that it was in general, if not always, during *this earlier period*, removed and put up again on each occasion. See Dulaure's Mem., *Rev. Rct.* iii. 3, 6, 12.

the court, though we have never seen any assigned, nor indeed inquired after—for the fact itself was, as we have said, scarcely mentioned. We have no means of solving this historical mystery, but we cannot avoid noticing it to account for the total inaction of the Guillotine for near four months. Our own conjecture is twofold—first, that it was abolished lest some attempt should be made to employ it, instead of the Convention itself, for the trial of the King; or, secondly, that, during the deadly struggle then carrying on between the Girondins and Jacobins, each party, doubtful of the result, was afraid of leaving in the hands of its triumphant antagonists so terrible an engine as this ready-constituted and well-organized tribunal, and both therefore concurred in its abolition, almost *sub silentio*, while on every other subject their contention was maintained with increasing animosity.

The first advantage in this struggle was to the Jacobins—when the Girondins were terrified into voting the death of the King, contrary to their pledges, their principles, their honour, and their consciences: that base and cruel cowardice was their own death-warrant. The next advantage was still more immediately decisive in favour of the Jacobins—it was the revival of the first Tribunal, by a decree of the 10th March, 1793, extorted from the Convention under the instant terror of wholesale assassination, and on which subsequently, under the more comprehensive title of *Revolutionary* Tribunal, unlimited jurisdiction and extravagant powers were conferred. Though the Girondins struggled on for a few weeks more, this blow was decisive and prophetic of their ultimate fate. Let us add that this iniquitous proceeding was carried on the motion and under the sanguinary menaces of Danton—the same Danton who a year after was led to execution, exclaiming, 'This time twelvemonth I proposed that infamous tribunal by which we die, and for which I beg pardon of God and men.'

In the midst of these contentions came the execution of the King. In the centre of the Place Louis Quinze*—then called Place de la Révolution, and since Place de la Concorde—and on the spot where

* We have again to wonder that Mr. Alison does not make any mention of the *guillotine* on this occasion, nor does he even say *where* the execution took place. He tells us the procession lasted two hours, but whether it went north, east, west, or south—or whether the King might not have been executed at Versailles or St. Denis—not a word; and, when he comes to speak of the Queen's death, he merely tells us that 'she was executed where the King had been'—which is true as to the great *Place* itself, but not as to the exact spot.

now stands the Luxor obelisk, there had stood a statue of Louis XV.; this statue was overthrown on the 11th of August, but the magnificent pedestal, though a little dilapidated about the summit, remained. There has been some doubt as to the exact spot where the scaffold for the execution of the King was erected. *Historians* never descend to such minutiæ, and painters and engravers are sometimes lax in their perspective, but we think we may say, chiefly on the authority of a fine print, 'presented to the Convention' by its publisher, Helman, that the *exact* site of the scaffold was a few yards west of this pedestal, that is, towards the Champs Elysées, and the steps were from the westward, so that the King when he mounted the scaffold looked over the pedestal of his grandfather's statue to the centre pavilion of his own devastated palace. When he endeavoured to address the people, he turned to the left towards the Rue Royale, and, Mercier tells us (*Nouveau Tableau de Paris*, ch. 82), that he was, at a signal from Santerre—who commanded the troops and directed the execution—seized from behind by two executioners, and, in spite of his desire to be allowed to finish what he had to say, he was bound to the *bascule*, or balanced plank, with his face towards the Tuileries; and that, either from the hurry of this struggle, or from the *bascule* being fitted for a taller person, the axe fell closer to the head than was usual, and there was more mutilation than ordinary. But Mercier is very loose authority on any subject: the print, and the letter of Sanson at p. 255, afford decisive evidence against Mercier's assertion.

We transcribe from Prudhomme, a trustworthy witness on this point, the following account of the scene that immediately followed:—

'Some individuals steeped their handkerchiefs in his blood. A number of armed volunteers crowded also to dip in the blood of the despot their pikes, their bayonets, or their sabres. Several officers of the Marseillese battalion, and others, dipped the covers of letters in this impure blood, and carried them on the points of their swords at the head of their companies, exclaiming "This is the blood of a tyrant!" One citizen got up to the guillotine itself, and, plunging his whole arm into the blood of Capet, of which a great quantity remained, he took up handfuls of the clotted gore, and sprinkled it over the crowd below, which pressed round the scaffold, each anxious to receive a drop on his forehead. "Friends," said this citizen, in sprinkling them, "we were threatened that *the blood of Louis should be*

on our heads; and so you see it is! !"—*Révolutions de Paris*, No. 185, p. 205.*

After this execution the Guillotine is no more heard of, at least as a political engine, until the 7th of April, 1793, when, under the auspices of the new Tribunal, it made its re-appearance in the *Place du Carrousel*, and began that series of murders which has no parallel in the annals of mankind.

It seems that from this time forward it remained in *permanent* readiness and exposed from one execution to another; but we find that, the Convention having resolved to transfer its sittings from the *Manége* to the palace of the Tuileries, a decree was passed (8th May, 1793) 'that, in consideration of the proximity of the *Carrousel* to the Hall of the Convention, the guillotine should be removed to some other place.' According to the 'Liste des Condamnés,' twelve persons were executed on the Carrousel between the 7th of April and 8th of May, on or about which day the machine was removed to the Place de la Révolution, *not* to the spot where the King's scaffold had stood, but a few yards on the eastern side of the pedestal, towards the Tuileries; and there it appears to have permanently remained to the 8th of June, 1794, one year and one month, during which time it had executed 1256 persons, as the 'Liste des Condamnés' expressly says: but from this should be deducted the eleven executed in the Carrousel, and the nine at the Grève—so that the number really executed in the Place Louis XV. was 1235.

Of this vast number there is scarcely one of whom some pathetic anecdote might not be told. We shall at present only notice four illustrious women, whose story involves, in addition to the individual interest that each excites, some reference to the mode of execution. Mademoiselle Marie Anne Charlotte de Corday d'Armans (commonly called *Charlotte* Corday, though she herself signed her Christian name *Marie*) was executed on the 17th of July, 1793: she had (what was now become) the distinction of being executed alone. After the execution, one of the executioners† held up her

* An atrocious though ridiculous instance of the malignant credulity of the French of that day, and indeed of all revolutionary days, about England, is the assertion that 'an *Englishman* dipped his handkerchief in the King's blood, which he hastened to convey to England, where it was *hoisted as a flag on the Tower of London!*'—(*Déclaration du Cit. Jourdan, Mémoires sur Septembre*, p. 155.)

† This was not Sanson, M. du Bois tells us, but one of his *helps*, whose ig-

lovely head by its beautiful hair, and in a fit of *Maratist* delirium slapped the cheeks—which, it was said, showed symptoms of sensibility, and *blushed.*

We should hardly have thought it worth while to repeat so incredible a story, but that, having been made a prominent argument in a physiological question that was raised about 1796, whether death by the guillotine was or was not instantaneous, it became matter of inquiry, and the balance of evidence seemed to be that some unusual appearance described as a *blush* was distinctly visible. Here is the account given by Dr. Sue, a physician of the first eminence and authority in Paris, in whose family medical skill had been hereditary:—

'The countenance of Charlotte Corday expressed the most unequivocal marks of indignation. Let us look back to the facts:—the executioner held the head suspended in one hand; the face was then pale, but had no sooner received the slap which the sanguinary wretch gave it than both cheeks visibly reddened. Every spectator was struck by the change of colour, and with loud murmurs cried out for vengeance on this cowardly and atrocious barbarity. It cannot be said that the redness was caused by the blow—for we all know that no blows will recall anything like colour to the cheeks of a corpse; besides, this blow was given on one cheek, and the other equally reddened.—*Sue, Opinion sur le Supplice de la Guillotine*, p. 9.

Dr. Sue, and some German physicians and surgeons after him, held that there does indubitably remain in the brain of a decollated head some degree (*un reste*) of thought, and in the nerves something of sensibility; and the case of Mademoiselle de Corday was alleged as proving that doctrine. We do not believe the fact of any discoloration, nor, if it were true, would it prove that the blush arose from continuous sensibility; and certainly the other opinion, that the extinction of life is instantaneous, is the more rational, and it has finally prevailed;* and all that we infer from the anecdote is, that

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nominious name—*François Le Gros*—is as well entitled to be preserved in the indignation of mankind as Marat, *Egalité*, or Robespierre. M. du Bois adds, that even the cannibal government of the day were forced, by the outcry of the public, to punish the fellow '*as he deserved*;' but he does not state what that punishment was. We suppose a *reprimand.*

* There is a story that, when the executioners exhibited the *heart* of Sir Everard Digby, executed for the Gunpowder Plot, to the people, exclaiming, 'This is the heart of a traitor!' the *head* articulated 'Thou liest!' and Lord Bacon believed that after evisceration the tongue could pronounce a few words. '*Magis certa* (*traditio*) *de homine qui de supplicii genere* (*quod diximus*) *evisceratus, postquam cor avulsum penitus esset et in carnificis manu, tria aut quatuor verba*

public opinion was willing to colour with its own indignation the cheeks of Mademoiselle de Corday.

Here also, on the 16th of October, 1793, fell a once beauteous head—now whitened by sorrow, not by age—and venerable for the angelic purity and patience, the royal courage and Christian submission, with which it had exchanged the most brilliant crown of the world for a crown of thorns: and that again for the crown of martyrdom. Here died the QUEEN—one of the noblest and the purest, and yet, if human judgments be alone weighed, the most unfortunate of women—tried in almost every possible agony of affliction—except a guilty conscience—and in that exception finding the consolation for all. She arrived at this scene of her last and greatest triumph, jolted in a common cart,* and ascended the scaffold amidst the vociferations of a crowd of furies, whom we hesitate to acknowledge as of her own sex. Never in that gorgeous palace, on which she now cast a last calm look, did she appear more glorious—never was she so really admirable as she was at that supreme moment of her earthly release.

We have followed the history of Marie Antoinette with the greatest diligence and scrupulosity. We have lived in those times. We have talked with some of her friends and some of her enemies; we have read, certainly not *all*, but hundreds of the libels written against her; and we have, in short, examined her life with—if we may be allowed to say so of ourselves—something of the accuracy of contemporaries, the diligence of inquirers, and the impartiality of historians, all combined; and we feel it our duty to declare, in as solemn a manner as literature admits of, our well-matured opinion that every reproach against the morals of the Queen was a gross calumny—that she was, as we have said, one of the purest of human beings. The grandeur of her mind—the courageous wisdom of her counsels (seldom adopted)—the minute and laborious yet wide and lofty, fulfilment of all her duties, and particularly as wife and mother—and, finally, the unequalled magnanimity and

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precum, auditus est proferre,' &c. Hist. Vit. et Mort. But this was a case of *evisceration*, and not of *decapitation*, which makes the whole difference as to the credibility of the story. We suppose that the sudden rush of air into the head through the severed neck produces that kind of sound which suggested to the *Père Duchesne* the horrid phrase of *'éternuer dans le sac.'*

* Mr. Alison for once departs from his hackneyed French authorities, and says she was drawn on a *hurdle*. There is no pretence for this statement; and, on the contrary, there is abundant evidence that she came in a *cart*.

patience—the greatest of magnanimities—with which she bore such misfortunes as never woman before suffered, are matters of history —the opprobrium of which, thank God! brands the French Revolution, and never can be effaced.

Here also died, on the 10th of May, 1794, Madame Elizabeth, a saint, if it be allowed to any mortal to be a saint. Not only innocent but inoffensive, she lived, in spite of her high birth, in a modest obscurity; she was a personification of piety, of domestic love, of charity, of humility, of self-devotion. One word of her own, often repeated, but never too often, shows her character, in all its grand and yet soft and mellowed lustre. When the mob broke into the Tuileries, on the 20th of June, 1792, the royal family were momentarily dispersed by the sudden irruption. The Queen and the Dauphin were in one part of the apartments, the King alone in another, where his heroic sister hastened to join him. The mob, who had been trained to particular hostility to the Queen, mistook Madame Elizabeth for her, and maltreated her with great grossness of language and serious menaces of violence. One of the terrified attendants was about to endeavour to save the princess by apprizing the assassins that she was *not* the Queen, when, with equal magnanimity and presence of mind, Madame Elizabeth,—desiring that if any one should be sacrificed it might be herself,—stopped him by *whispering*, '*Oh no, don't undeceive them.*' Neither Greek nor Roman story has any superior instance of self-devotion. This noble creature had been in close confinement in the Temple from the 13th of August, 1792, down to the day of her trial, seeing no one but her little niece, and watched day and night by her persecutors; yet she was doomed to die—the devil only knows why—for some imaginary and impossible conspiracy. During the long transit to the scaffold, she was seen to encourage with pious gestures her fellow-sufferers, and when, on the scaffold, one of the executioners (we hope not Sanson) rudely tore off the covering of her neck, she turned—her own hands being tied—to another, and said, softly and sublimely, '*I implore you, for the love of your mother*, to cover my neck!'

Here too, on the 9th November, 1793, between the deaths of the Queen and Madame Elizabeth, was sent to the scaffold, by her own former friends and favourites,* Marie Phlipon, Madame Roland,

* Robespierre had been a peculiar favourite and *protégé* of hers.

a woman of humble birth with great ambition, narrow education, with a great love of literature, strong passions with a cold temper, and possessing above all that dangerous species of talent which decides summarily and plausibly on the events of the moment, without having either the patience or the power to inquire whence they spring and whither they are tending. Her Memoirs, written in prison, in the subdued and conciliatory tone of adversity, and with the great charm of an easy yet forcible style, have recommended her to general sympathy, and to the enthusiastic admiration of all who partake her revolutionary opinions. Those who wish to think with unmixed admiration of Madame Roland must take her up where she left the world—at the *guichet* of the *Conciergerie*. Her former political life—full of animosity, faction, intolerance, bad faith, and even cruelty—will engage little favour; and, as happens in so many other cases in the history of the Revolution, we should cease to pity Madame Roland if we remembered that she suffered only what she had been during her reign—for she too had *reigned* —not reluctant to inflict on others. She died with great resolution, in company with a M. La Marche, who did not show so much firmness. It was a favour to be allowed to die first, in order to be spared the terrible spectacle of the death of others, and this favour —denied to Madame Elizabeth—was offered to Madame Roland, but she thought her companion needed it more than herself, and begged him to precede her; and when the executioner objected, she said with a smile, 'You won't refuse the last request of a lady?' and La Marche was executed first.

It was some time, though we do not know exactly the day, between the executions of Charlotte Corday and the Queen, that a huge plaster statue of Liberty—grotesque by its disproportion and hideous from its distortion—was erected on the pedestal of the overthrown statue of Louis XV., in front of which the new scaffold stood. In a print of the execution of Mdlle. de Corday there is no statue on the pedestal; but it was there, if we may credit Helman's print, when the Queen was immolated, and to it Madame Roland, with something of characteristic pedantry, is said to have addressed her celebrated apostrophe, 'O Liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!' Crimes enough—crimes enormous—have been committed in the name of liberty ever since the 14th of July, 1789, and many abominable ones during the ministry and with, at least, the cor...vance of Madame

Roland and her husband, but it was not till she was herself sent to prison and brought to the scaffold that they struck her so forcibly. When we find Danton 'begging pardon'—*on the scaffold*—'of God and man for the institution of the Revolutionary Tribunal,' and Madame Roland—*also on the scaffold*—lamenting 'the crimes committed in the *name of liberty*,' we acknowledge the sincerity, but cannot but feel a kind of revulsion and indignation at the selfishness, of their tardy and unavailing repentance.

We abstain from any details of the thousands of murders committed by the Guillotine at that time, but one fact will enable our readers to understand something of its horrors. It was proved on the trial of Fouquier-Tinville that 160 persons, of all ages, sexes, and ranks, were tried and executed on a charge of *conspiracy*, not merely false, but absurd, visionary, and impossible:—forty-five of these persons, who were utterly unknown to each other, were tried and condemned within *twenty minutes*, and executed in the same evening in almost as short a space.

These executions were for many months the amusement—the *spectacle* of the *people*, we wish we could safely say the *populace*, of Paris; but, as we before stated, chairs were stationed round the instrument, where *women*, in a station of life to be able to pay for that amusement, used to hire seats, and sit, and chat, and work (whence they were called *les tricoteuses de la Guillotine*), while waiting for the tragedy which they looked at as a farce.

We find in the *Revue Retrospective* a curious letter incidentally descriptive of this elegant scene of Parisian amusement:—

'*The Procureur Général Rœderer to Citizen Guidon.*

'13th May, 1793.

'I enclose, Citizen, the copy of a letter from Citizen Chaumette, solicitor to the Commune of Paris, by which you will perceive that complaints are made that, after these public executions, the blood of the criminals remains in pools upon the *Place*, that dogs come to drink it, and that crowds of men feed their eyes with this spectacle, which naturally instigates their hearts to ferocity and blood.

'I request you, therefore, to take the earliest and most convenient measures to remove from the eyes of men a sight so afflicting to humanity.'

Our readers will observe the tender regret—not that all this blood was shed, but—that it was not wiped up; and they will be startled when they recollect that at the date of this letter not

above a dozen persons had been yet executed here, but that within one year the blood of a *thousand* victims had saturated the small spot of ground. In one of the foolish modern-antique processions of the Convention, the whole cortège was delayed and thrown into confusion because the cattle that were drawing some of their theatrical machines could neither be induced nor forced to traverse this blood-tainted place. This Chaumetté was one of the most impious and sanguinary of the whole tribe, and we could almost believe that he envied the dogs the blood they drank. He it was that bullied the wretched idiot Gobel, revolutionary Archbishop of Paris, to come to the bar of the Convention to abjure Christianity, and proclaim himself an impostor, at the head of a procession in which asses were insultingly decorated with the sacred emblems of religion. Chaumette himself it was who introduced to the Convention a prostitute in the character of the Goddess of Reason. Robespierre sent this whole clique to the Guillotine, and on the 13th of April, 1794, Chaumette's own blood flowed to increase the horrors of which he had complained.

The Guillotine remained in permanence in the Place de la Révolution till the 8th of June, 1794, when the inhabitants of the streets through which these *batches* (*fournées*), as they were called, of sufferers used to pass, became at last tired of that agreeable sight, and solicited its removal. This would probably have been not much regarded; but there was a more potent motive. Robespierre seems at this time to have adopted a new policy, and to have formed some design of founding a dictatorial authority in his own person on the basis of religion and morals. On the 7th June he made his famous report acknowledging '*l'Etre Suprême*,' and appointing the 20th June for the great *fête* in the garden of the Tuileries, which was to celebrate this recognition. Of this *fête* Robespierre was to be the *Pontifex Maximus*, and it can hardly be doubted that it was to remove the odious machine from the immediate scene of his glorification that it was—the day after the decree and ten days before the *fête*—removed to the Place St. Antoine in front of the ruins of the Bastille; but that a day might not be lost, it was removed on a Decadi, the republican Sabbath. It stood, however, but five days in the Place St. Antoine, for the shopkeepers even of that patriotic quarter did not like their new neighbour; and so, after having in these *five* days executed *nineteen-six* persons, it was removed still further to the *Barrière du Trône*,

or, as it was called in the absurd nomenclature of the day, *Barrière Renversée.*

There it stood from the 9th of June to the fall of Robespierre, 9th Thermidor (27th July, 1794). So say all the authorities; but an incident in the trial of Fouquier-Tinville seems to prove that, in the early part of July at least, the scaffold stood in the *Place de la Révolution*, and that the instrument was dismounted every evening. A lady, the Marquise de Feuquières, was to be tried on the 1st of July: the whole evidence against her was a document which had been placed under the seals of the law at her country-house, near Versailles, and Fouquier sent off the night before a special messenger to bring it up; the messenger was delayed by the local authorities, and could not get back to Paris till half-past four on the evening of the 1st, when, 'on arriving at the *Place de la Révolution*, he found the executioner dismounting the engine, and was informed that the Marquise de Feuquières *had been guillotined an hour before*,—having been tried and condemned without a tittle of any kind of evidence; and this fact, attested by his own messenger, Fouquier could not deny—though *we* cannot reconcile it with the other evidence as to the locality of the guillotine at that particular period. In all the *Listes des Condamnés* Madame de Feuquières and twenty-three other persons are stated to have suffered on the 1st of July at the *Barrière du Trône.*

In the forty-nine days in which it is said to have stood at the *Barrière du Trône* it despatched 1270 persons of both sexes, and of all ages and ranks, and it became necessary to build a kind of *sanguiduct*, to carry off the streams of blood; and on the very last day, when the tyrant had already fallen, and that the smallest interruption would have sufficed to have stopped the fatal procession, forty-nine persons passed almost unguarded through the stupefied streets to the place of execution. And here we have the last occasion to mention Sanson: and it is to his credit, as indeed all the personal details related of him seem to be. On the 9th Thermidor there was, about half-past three in the afternoon, just as this last batch of victims was about to leave the Conciergerie, a considerable commotion in the town, caused by the revolt against Robespierre. At that moment Fouquier, on his way to dine with a neighbour, passed through the court where the prisoners were ascending the fatal carts. Sanson, whose duty it was to conduct the prisoners to execution, ventured to stop the *Accusateur Public*, to represent

him that there were some rumours of a commotion, and to suggest whether it would not be prudent to postpone the execution till at least the next morning. Fouquier roughly replied that the law must take its course. He went to dinner, and the forty-nine victims went to the scaffold, whither in due time he followed them!

The next day the Guillotine was removed back to the scene of its longest triumphs—the Place de la Révolution—where on the 28th of July it avenged humanity on Robespierre and twenty-one of his followers; on the next day sixty-nine, and on the day after thirteen more of his associates fell, amongst whom were most of the judges, juries, and officers of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and a majority of the *Commune* of Paris—greater monsters, if possible, than the members of the Tribunal. Here indeed the trite quotation—

'Neque enim lex æquior ulla
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua,'—

may be applied with incomparable propriety.

Of the operations of the Guillotine in the *Departments* during the Parisian Reign of Terror we have very scanty information. We only know that in most of the great towns it was in permanent activity, and that in some remarkable instances, as at Avignon, Nantes, and Lyons, its operations were found too slow for 'the vengeance of the people,' and were assisted by the wholesale massacres of *fusillades* and *noyades*. At Nantes, and some other places, the Conventional Proconsuls carried M. de Clermont Tonnerre's principle to the extreme extent of ostentatiously inviting the executioner to dinner.

For some months after the fall of Robespierre the Parisian Guillotine was, though not permanently, yet actively, employed against his immediate followers; and subsequently, against the *tail* (as it was called) of his faction, who attempted to revive the Reign of Terror; but we have no distinct details of these proceedings; the numbers, though great, were insignificant in comparison with the former massacres, and no one, we believe, suffered who did not amply deserve it—Fouquier-Tinville himself and the remainder of his colleagues, the judges and jury of the tribunal, included. His and their trial is the most extraordinary document that the whole Revolution has produced, and develops a series of turpitudes and horrors such as no imagination could conceive. But that does not belong to our present subject, and we must hasten to conclude.

Under the Directory, the Consulate, and the Empire, we do not find that any immoderate use was made of the Guillotine;*—the very name had become intolerably odious, and the ruling powers were reluctant to use it even on legitimate occasions. During the Restoration it was rarely employed, and never, as far as we recollect for any political crime. When occasion for its use occurred it was brought forth and erected in the Place de Grève, and removed immediately after the execution; and we ourselves can bear witness —though we could not bring ourselves to see it—that one of these tragedies, which occurred while we happened to be in Paris, appeared to throw a kind of gloom and uneasiness over the whole city, that contrasted very strongly and very favourably with our recollection of the events of twenty years before.

After the accession of Louis Philippe, for whom the Guillotine must have been an object of the most painful contemplation, sentences of death were also very rare, and certainly never executed where there was any possible room for mercy. The executions, too, when forced upon him, took place at early hours and in remote and uncertain places; and every humane art was used to cover the operations of the fatal instrument with a modest veil, not only from motives of general decency and humanity, but also, no doubt, from national pride and personal sensibility. What Frenchman would not wish that the name and memory of the Guillotine could be blotted from the history of mankind? 'The word *Guillotine*,' says the author of '*Les Fastes de l'Anarchie*,' 'should be effaced from the language.' But the revolutionary horrors which France is naturally so anxious to forget, it the more behoves us and the rest of Europe to remember and meditate. Such massacres as we have been describing will probably never be repeated; they will, no doubt, stand unparalleled in the future, as they do in the former annals of the world; but they should never be forgotten as an example of the incalculable excesses of popular insanity.

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* We should, perhaps, except Buonaparte's execution of George Cadoudal and a batch of thirteen *Vendéans* in 1804.

NOTE ON SANSON THE EXECUTIONER, AND HIS FAMILY.

OUR readers will be the less surprised at the style and spirit of the observations made by M. Sanson, *antè*, p. 534, when they learn the following particulars of him and his family. It appears that, when the Revolution had swept away every other trace of feudality, M. Sanson was a *gentleman* of respectable genealogy, exercising a *hereditary* office derived from the ancestors of the monarch whose head fell by his (we believe) reluctant hand.

1. *Charles Sanson*, a native of Abbeville, and a relation of the great geographer of that name, being in 1675 lieutenant in a regiment garrisoned at Dieppe, married the daughter of the Executioner of Normandy. In 1684, *Carlier*, the Executioner of Paris, being dismissed, *Charles Sanson* was appointed in his room. He died in 1695, and was succeeded by his son—

2. Charles Sanson, who died 12th September, 1726, having only the month previous resigned in favour of his son—

3. *Charles John Baptiste Sanson*, who was appointed by letters patent, dated the 12th September, '*Exécuteur des arrêts et sentences criminelles de la ville, prévôté, et vicomté de Paris*,' but, being very young, he was authorised to exercise his office by deputy; the Parliament of Paris appointed one *Prudhomme* the Deputy, and fixed the majority of the principal at the early age of sixteen, when he came into office and filled it to his death, on the 4th August, 1778. His son,

4. CHARLES HENRY SANSON (the author of the *Observations*, and the executioner of the King), the eldest of ten children, was born the 15th of February, 1739, and, having supplied his father's place since 1758, was, on his death, in 1778, admitted to the office in his own right on the 26th December. In consequence of the discussions raised by Guillotin and Clermont Tonnerre, he petitioned the National Assembly to be considered on the footing of any other French citizen. In 1790 he wished to resign in favour of his son, but this was not arranged till the 1st September, 1795, when he retired on a pension. He had two sons, but the eldest was killed on the 27th August, 1792, by falling from the scaffold as he was exhibiting the head of a man executed for the forgery of assignats. In consequence of this the other and now only son,

5. *Henry Sanson*, born the 24th December, 1767, and at the time of his father's resignation, in 1795, a *captain of artillery*, was called to the hereditary office, and in consequence gave up his military rank. He died at Paris on the 18th August, 1840. He was an elector, and had, we are told, a taste for music and literature. He was succeeded by his son,

6. *Henry Clement Sanson*, born the 27th May, 1799, and admitted to his office the 1st December, 1840; and is, we suppose, the *only* man in France who holds any station by anything like hereditary descent.—(*Du Bois*, p. 27.)

We find from several accounts that two of Charles Henry Sanson's brothers assisted him in his operations, and especially at the death of the king; and we learn from Peltier that they had a narrow escape of being themselves sacrificed after the 10th of August. M. Du Bois assures us that the celebrated Sanson 'was, like his *ancestors*, a very worthy man (*fort honnêtes gens*), and that the present dignitary is in person a fine figure, with an elegant and noble countenance, and a very sweet and agreeable expression!'—p. 25.

THE END.

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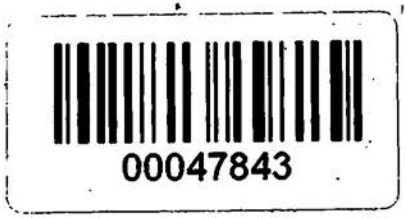
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